

*The Point of View  
of Modern Education*

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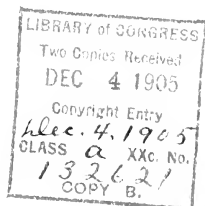


# *The Point of View of Modern Education*

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*To my dear father, my first and noblest teacher, this book  
is affectionately dedicated by the author.*





## *Preface*

**T**HIS little book is the substance of lectures before Mothers' clubs delivered from month to month through a series of years. It is an effort to make application of some of the recent discoveries in science to the training of children.

The now generally accepted theory of the growth of the human race through the ages, and of each individual born into the world in modern times, is that known as evolution. The old education was founded upon a radically different view of the world and of man. Educational practice, especially in later generations, has not been consistent with its theory, in many important respects, and progressive teachers have felt handicapped by a doctrine which was opposed to their methods.

Every institution of the social world is now adjusting itself to the theory of evolution. The church, the home, and the school have

been more tardy than science and industrial society in obeying its call, but the school is now seeking to conform, in its methods, to this new movement as rapidly as conditions will permit.

This little volume is merely a series of suggestions, which the thoughtful teacher may find helpful in her study of children and of the relations of the school to the home. It is addressed quite as much to parents as to teachers and the author hopes it may help to bring the school and the home into a close and more sympathetic union.

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# THE POINT OF VIEW OF MODERN EDUCATION.

## I.

### THE GROWTH OF THE AFFECTIONS.

THE HOME is the cradle of the human affections, and since these have most to do with our happiness, it seems profitable to consider their laws of growth, so that the child may be placed under conditions most favorable to their proper development.

The child enters the world a little animal and though his advent is attended with all the helplessness indicative of greater brain power, nevertheless his marks of superiority are, at this time, completely hidden, and his needs are largely those of his brothers in the animal kingdom. The young of any species find great comfort and enjoyment in warmth—animal warmth—instinctively “snuggling” up to any living object near them, particularly at night; and every naturalist can tell of the various “ar-

tificial mothers" in the form of bunches of hair or rolls of fur that have been devised to meet the need so piteously emphasized by little orphans of every form and color. The human baby is no exception to this rule; he learns to know his mother through the sense of touch, and, perhaps, of smell. Himself an animal, his budding affections must have a material or sense basis upon which the higher love is builded as he rises to a higher plane. The little cot bed and the artificial means of nourishment, so often employed from the moment of birth, may, therefore, become a hindrance to this development, even though they are frequently a hygienic necessity.

Again, the child, like the adult, instinctively seeks companionship suited to his own degree of intelligence. He cannot, at first, understand or appreciate the society of grown people, but his dawning interest is aroused by the presence of animals; a pet of some kind, as a dog or a cat, something which he can fondle and play with, is an absolutely necessary condition of his early growth toward a loving and affectionate manhood. Later on comes the desire for the society of other children; but the child

is well on toward youth before he really loves parents and friends. We should not, therefore, expect too much of dawning capabilities lest we weaken them by too early or too vigorous exercise.

Propinquity has also much to do with this matter. The child becomes attached only to those with whom he is brought in contact; hence it follows that he should spend his early years in the bosom of his family, where all interest centers in the home. Attachments and habits, the strongest known to man, are now forming for life, and any affection or occupation which seriously diverts attention from the home must prove prejudicial to them, no matter how valuable it may be for other things. For this reason, the custom of sending children early to school, except when it is the least of two evils, should be abandoned. The establishment of a wrong relation is most harmful because of the fact that it makes more difficult the establishment of a right one later. If, during the years that should be devoted to the formation of family ties, other absorbing relationships are allowed to share the child's mind, we must not complain, when later on it is

found that his strongest attachments and greatest interests are sought outside of the home. Statistics show that children entering school under seven years of age suffer a distinct loss in weight and nerve power, yet how often we see mothers in comfortable circumstances eager to place babies of four in the kindergarten. The fact that the treatment there is often more humane and scientific than that of the home does not remove the evils just stated. The mere nervous excitement attendant upon getting ready for school at a certain hour not infrequently deprives the child of all appetite for breakfast, and he then rushes off to engage for several hours in *directed* play, while all other animals of the same age, relatively, are allowed to frisk at will in the fields, or to doze unmolested when tired. Why is the child with his millions of nerve cells denied the fresh air and the freedom so necessary to the development of all other animals? What farmer would subject young calves, or lambs, or colts, or anything that breathes and has money value, to the same treatment? No *directed* "play," however pleasant in itself, is pure play, for the reason that the child's mind is on the stretch to



observe and follow the teacher's motions and directions; hence the three or four hours in the kindergarten are as great a drain upon the child's nerve power as our morning in the office or the school-room is upon us. What he needs is more *undirected* play, more rest, more repose, more fresh air.

But there is another phase of this important subject. The child becomes more and more interested in his school, just at the time when uninterrupted family life should lay the foundation of the holiest and most sacred relationships. No human being can serve two masters, and the home life suffers in consequence. Ten or twelve years later he may leave home with comparative safety, but now, in infancy, he receives impressions, cultivates affections, and forms habits which cannot be gained in later years. Failure to understand this principle is the one cause of the present decline in home influence and parental authority. During the first seven or eight years of life every effort should be made to center the child's enjoyment and interest in the family circle. An entertaining story after supper, a rosy cheeked apple at bed time, some domestic animal to pet and fon-

dle as one's own, a flower bed to dig and cultivate, keeps many a boy and girl from perdition. Curtains and carpets are sometimes preserved at the price of human souls.

Some family duty is, also, of great value in promoting affection, for we generally learn to love those dependent upon us. But these duties must, at first, be very simple and very few. Putting father's slippers ready every evening, placing baby's spoon by his plate at meal time, are quite sufficient for beginners, and the child is delighted to find himself of use; while if no one but he is allowed to perform these little services, a sense of responsibility and helpfulness is gradually developed—an acquisition of great value in after life. Little gifts at Christmas and upon birthdays also tend to strengthen affection, *if they are the product of the child's own effort*. A single flower seed sown and tended by little hands to place on mother's stand in recognition of some anniversary, brings a joy to both recipient and giver which no expensive purchase could bestow; while, all the time, loving memories are taking root, simple habits forming which will follow one to his grave. Perhaps no single device is so

valuable in promoting these qualities as is a Christmas tree prepared by the children themselves. There is the saving of the pennies; the chains to be made; the popcorn to be strung; the delighted and important consultations in corners; the wonderful secrets to be kept; the happy dreams and the presents; a bit of cardboard stitched in colored wool to grace father's new book as a marker; a bead chain for the young lady of the family; a spool box made by the son for mother, and regarded by all the children as a marvelous work of art; and grand-mother's needle book—Heaven help us! One lies before me now made in my own childhood for one of these occasions—a poor faded thing fit only for the rag-bag! The fingers that fashioned and the hands that received it are resting together in the dust, but the memory of that far off Christmas morning and its attendant associations are among the strongest influences that bind me to home and family. These early memories are always the most lasting, and children united in a loving partnership during infancy are apt to continue the relationship through life.

Aside from these considerations it is well

to learn, early in life, the enjoyment that may be gotten from simple things. Wealth may be a great blessing, and often is, but one is apt to forget that the truest pleasures are not bought with money. The child who starts upon a career of indiscriminate spending is always discontented and unhappy. No purse is long enough to supply every want, and life is robbed of all real happiness by the constant desire for some new possession or some new experience. This mental attitude is, of course, fatal to all spiritual growth, and explains why children possessing all the advantages of wealth and opportunity sometimes appear less intelligent and less resourceful than those in poorer circumstances. Necessity is the mother of invention and uneducated human beings seldom make an effort unless impelled by want or desire. Fill the home, especially during the early years, with pleasant and tender experiences, with co-operative occupations and amusements.

We begin life as animals, our affections are born in the mere animal or physical sensations of warmth and comfort; later comes the attachment to pets—the kitten or the pony; then the desire for the companionship of other chil-

## GROWTH OF THE AFFECTIONS. 9

dren. These in time lay the foundation for love of parents and of other adult relatives. The ties of home cannot be made too strong or too lasting; they are the steps by which the human soul climbs to love of his fellows, to altruism, nay more, to the love of God himself. The child born in a home destitute of affection seldom emerges with a large love for the race, because he carries with him the loveless relations formed in the family and, of course, it follows that one who has not learned to love his fellow whom he hath seen cannot reach the culminating point of human affection, the love of God. Home cannot be too peaceful, too happy, too attractive. It is when development is arrested in one or the other of these stages that man remains a materialist and fails to attain his highest possibilities.

Another great aid to the cultivation of affection is an early acquaintance with nature, such an acquaintance from infancy as can come only from a free, untrammelled companionship with all her various forms. There are many reasons why this should be. Man enters the world with about one hundred fifty rudimentary organs; organs which are now of no use except as a

sort of scaffolding upon which other organs are built; for nature does not seem willing to discard anything once made, preferring rather to change it gradually into something else as the needs of the organism become different. Take, for example, the tadpole; as he gains in growth his tail is slowly absorbed. If, for any reason, he should be deprived of his tail he would have no hind legs when he develops into a frog. Ages ago, in another form, man lived in the water and required a breathing apparatus like that of other aquatic animals. Traces of the gill slits, are even now discernible in the sides of the head of the embryo child where they form the basis of the ear passages, organs of the throat, etc. Now as the human body travels upward through all its various stages to reach its present development, so it is claimed that the mind in like manner repeats the experiences of the race, each stage forming the foundation upon which the next is based.

Experiences, reaching through ages, may be lived in a few weeks by us, and some even come to us before birth. It is interesting to watch the child as he passes through some of the more easily discerned of these steps. At one

time he is a robber and pounces down upon his playmates pretending to rob them. He is now in the stage of development represented by the race as it roamed the ancient plains in quest of plunder. Again he is a tramp and lives the migratory life of remote ancestry. So he passes through the numberless experiences of the past and under proper conditions emerges into healthy mental maturity. But if, for any cause, he is arrested in one of these stages, the effect is deplorable. Arrest in the predatory state may mean to be a robber in one form or another all one's life; in the migratory stage to be a tramp; and so of the others. *A criminal is an example of arrested development.*

The early race lived with nature. Primitive man worshiped the sun and moon. God dwelt in the fountains and the trees; stones became charms and superstition peopled the earth with spirits. Out of all this, man, as he grows intelligent, progresses steadily toward a pure and elevating faith. Thus it is with the child; he, too, must pass through these experiences. Let him pray to the moon, if he will; let him talk to the flowers and fill his dirty little pocket with stones which he fondly believes in as charms.

Let him pet and fondle his older brothers, the dog and the horse; let him learn to love all forms of nature. His faith as a Christian will be stronger for these experiences. It is only when man's development is arrested that he remains a pagan, a worshiper of nature instead of nature's God.\*

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\*See Drummond's "Ascent of Man," Chapter 2; also "Pedagogical Seminary," October, 1901; "Some Fundamental Principles in Sunday School and Bible Teaching."



II.

THE THREE NERVE CENTERS.

There are, in the human body, three nerve centers whose well being is of commanding importance to health and happiness. The first of these is situated below and back of the heart, and its condition through life depends very largely upon the child's condition and training during the first ten years. Of course man's crowning glory is his soul, his spiritual nature, but as all the manifestations of his spirit must be made through and by means of the body, it follows that this body should be properly developed and kept in the best possible condition, if for no other reason than that it may do its work well.

1. The nerve center just referred to has much to do with the stomach and is largely the cause of what is called the "blues." Its unhealthy state has caused many a man to give himself up for lost, and is the prime cause of more than half the misery and despair in the world. It is

impossible for any human being to take a hopeless view of life when this nerve center is strong and well. How important, then, that the child have a good start in this respect. During the first ten or twelve years he is, or should be, a healthy animal; plenty of simple food, plenty of sleep and much living in the open air are his essential requirements. If he is in normal health he does not care for nor understand the sermons we so persistently preach to him; all our ethical lessons, with their sugar-coated moral tucked in at the end, slip from him as easily as water from a duck's back. We should be thankful that it is so. It is the child's only protection from later indifference, hypocrisy, or morbid introspection. When older he may learn by these means, perhaps, but not now. Nature has provided other teachers for these early years, but his chief business now is to gain perfect health, a strong, vigorous body, and the needed sense training which cannot be acquired later, which are all so necessary to the well-being of this important nerve center. No social elevation or wealth acquired in later life can compensate for neglect of these requirements. How many capi-

talists and scholars would cheerfully yield half their kingdom could they gain sweet, refreshing sleep and be able to enjoy a good dinner! We must see to it, therefore, that children store up in early life nerve force for later years.

2. As he emerges from infancy it is noticeable that he becomes more active; the tasting, touching, and smelling of every object that he encounters gradually abate as he gains sense experience, and new activities come into play. Heretofore his motions have been largely such as were controlled by the muscles of the trunk or body, but he now begins to use those of the arms and legs. Hitherto the large head has made rapid locomotion somewhat difficult, but when the different members assume juster proportions he becomes more and more active—running, jumping, and climbing. It is the business of these years to cultivate the muscles of the arms and legs, not only on account of the mere physical growth stimulated by this means, but also because the will depends upon this sort of exercise for healthy, normal development.

This nerve center supposed to be the special organ of the will is situated in the lower and back part of the skull above the spine. Through

this lesser brain the will controls the muscular system and the highest authority in America has told us that it is well nigh impossible for a strong, healthy will to exist without the cultivation of these muscles. Schools which recognize this necessity provide for games such as ball playing, leap frog, battledoor and shuttlecock, and a host of others which give the activity so much craved by the young, growing limbs. It is, therefore, an unfortunate error to keep little girls shut up in the house and to dress them in such manner that free play of the limbs is prevented. A tomboy usually develops into a healthy, womanly woman; a pale, delicate girl becomes—what?

3. The higher nerve centers, those which have to do with thought and the higher emotions, are the last to develop and are dependent upon the muscles of the fingers. It is this fact that furnishes the argument for manual training in the schools, and renders wood carving, fancy work and weaving, when not too fine or intricate, of immense importance to the growing boy or girl. The period when this work is most beneficial to the child is from the tenth to the fifteenth year, though there may be variations

according to development or treatment. Children begin to show interest in these occupations about the ninth year, and may do the coarser kinds of sewing, etc., with great profit. The only objection to this time is the general tendency to give too much and too intricate work, so that it assumes somewhat the character of drudgery, whereas the tasks should be very simple, admitting of very large stitches and employing plenty of pure color. The great importance of these facts is, as yet, not well understood by women generally. They are apt to think that any exercise which brings the muscles into play is good—and this is true in a general sense—but the truth which needs strongest emphasis is that certain nerve centers are developed along with certain muscles, and that this development is accomplished best at certain quite well defined periods of the child's life.

Moreover, the exercise must be of a kind adapted to the muscles we wish to train. Young men enter our Normal colleges every semester confident that years spent in felling trees, or following the plow, have given them superior muscle training, but a very few weeks' ex-

perience teaches that such development is, in many instances, but little better than none—so difficult is it to cure bad habits, to bring stiffened muscles into play, or to enlarge nerve cells that are dependent for healthy growth upon the proper exercise of certain sets of muscles at earlier periods of life.

The higher nerve centers (as has been said) have to do with the higher emotions; feelings of benevolence, the desire to help the race, to be of use to one's fellows, love of God—all have their seat in these brain cells that are developed through the muscles of the hands and fingers. There is, perhaps, no single truth that has so much to do with the welfare of the race as this. A small, undeveloped hand is not a mark of beauty, as some think, but of weakness; a sure indication of certain neglected, uneducated muscles, and a consequent lack of will and of emotional strength.

This is often the source of wrong conclusions. For instance, an individual who has not attained this cultivation of the fingers may, perhaps, possess a stronger emotional nature than one who has received this training; but this is not a right comparison. What one is should

## THE THREE NERVE CENTERS. 19

be compared with what he might have been. How much richer would this man of deep emotions have been had he received this training? The wealthy and the very poor are alike handicapped in the application of this principle; one by the hard, daily grind of poverty which converts them into mere machines, and the other by a failure to understand its significance and a consequent disinclination to all labor, particularly manual labor. This is only natural. Few, if any, are inclined to work, or to make any kind of effort unless some benefit is to be gained thereby. When once it is generally understood that the development of the higher nerve centers and the higher emotions depends upon the cultivation of the fingers, and that the time for this cultivation is from the ninth to the fifteenth year, there will be a marked change in public sentiment. Not only will the rich feel that their children's welfare depends upon a recognition of and conformity to this truth, but the mutual attitude of capital and labor must change because expert skill in hand work will give the employer a respect for the strength and patience necessary to success in this kind of occupation. Nothing so

tends to sympathy as a common experience. Some one has said that to help an ant one must be an ant; so, to understand and appreciate the dignity of labor one must labor. Knowledge in this field cannot be gained by proxy.

An organ is ready for work at the time it attains its growth, and this readiness is generally indicated by an interest in the kind of work the organ is intended to do. So, in general, it is a good thing to consult the child's inclinations when planning his occupations. Of course this, like every other rule, can be carried to extremes. Any one can recall children who are never required to do anything against their wishes, and who flit from one fancy to another in a manner suggestive of very injurious habits. A sharp, clean cut distinction should always be drawn between this sort of dissipation and a genuine interest. Necessarily the child must have a great deal of latitude in early years. His object just now is to gain many new interests; something which cannot be done unless he is allowed numberless experiences, and large freedom. System and thoroughness are a drawback to this kind of growth; their time comes later. Nevertheless this does not mean



that during the first ten or twelve years the child should flit from one object to another until it is impossible for him to concentrate his mind upon anything for more than a moment at a time. As he nears his teens, all the tastes and fancies that have sprouted during infancy and childhood should begin to arrange themselves. Some will drop out of existence altogether, and some will gradually expand with his mental growth into instruments of good or evil, for he now begins to show the results of earlier training. While it is important that the child should have large opportunities for observation and day dreaming, yet at the same time, certain habits of application should have begun to shape themselves in his mind and a certain sense of responsibility should be aroused if he is to become useful and efficient later on.

Every phase of education has its own particular period, and nothing is more fascinating than the study which is to enable us to know not only what is to be done but when to do it. Perhaps an illustration will make this point clearer. Children are interested in the phenomena of nature at a very tender age. In fact their attention is attracted to these as soon as

they begin to notice. It follows that they should live much of the time with nature from birth. Delay in this companionship is often disastrous to this interest. The child of six or eight is delighted to work in a garden, to sow seeds or rake the soil, and when you gain his confidence he will entertain you for hours with tales of the robin that lost its leg, or the bobolink that answered his call. But let this dawning interest be starved or stifled and we have indifference in later years. Last spring some older pupils, about three hundred, were given flower seeds with instructions concerning the planting and care of the plants. At the same time seeds and instructions were given to an equal number of primary children. In the early autumn these gardens were examined with the result that just twenty times as many neat, flourishing flower beds were found in the gardens of the smaller children as in those of the grammar grades. The reason is not far to seek; the time for the best and fullest cultivation of this interest had gone by. Then, too, the older children had a greater number of interests. Their attention has become dissipated by the numberless attractions of the bicycle and the rowing party, the foot

ball game and the hunt, until growing flowers seemed very tame, and one recognizes the grim humor of the B 7th composition which stated gravely that the only real use of the flower bed was to provide blossoms for the button-hole "when a boy went out of an evenin.' "

The purpose of this chapter is to suggest the following truths:

Each nerve center has its own appropriate set of muscles upon which it depends for development.

Each set of muscles has a definite time or age for development.

The higher emotional nature depends upon the development of the fingers and hand.

If we accept the division of time suggested by Dr. Sherman Davis, we may say:

Period of first teeth—sense training related to groups of ganglia or nerve center back of and below the heart.

Period of second teeth—muscle training of arm and leg related to development of the will.

Period of wisdom teeth—development of the higher emotional nature.\*

\*Read *Scott's Organic Education*, Chapter 1; *A Study in Youthful Degeneracy*, Pedagogical Seminary, page 221; *The Study of Motor Ability of Children*, Annual Report of U. S. Commissioner of Education, year 1897-8, Vol. II, Page 1291; *Influence of Exercise on Growth*, Journal Exper. Med. 1896, Vol. I, Page 516; *Relation Between Growth and Disease*, American Medical Association 1891; *Significance of Palatal Deformities in Idiots*, Journal of Medical Science, London, Jan 1897, Vol. 43, Page 72.

## III.

## THE CHILD AND HIS TEACHERS.

MUCH has been said in the former chapters to show that the chief function of education in the first ten or twelve years is the cultivation of a strong, healthy body, and that neglect of this is sure to entail suffering or weakness in after life. But, while bearing this in mind, it must not be forgotten that this period is also most important to mental and moral development, and that whether we so intend or not, nearly all the fundamental processes of education have been established or arrested long before the child reaches his teens.

Now, of course, if the child has intelligent, capable parents and an ideal home it would be far better for him not to enter a school room during his first decade, but since many intelligent people have not the opportunity to devote themselves to their children's education, and since many more are not able to do this work even when leisure permits, it follows that the

primary school is a most valuable and necessary institution, a sort of auxiliary home, in which the true teacher becomes a kind of foster parent to carry on the training which must be given during this period; but as the rare attempts at foster parenthood among the lower animals are generally rendered unsuccessful through lack of experience and knowledge of conditions, so in the school room much havoc is wrought by its assumption of responsibilities which do not belong to it.

Nothing is more fatal to either an individual or an institution than an attempt to relieve it of duties peculiarly its own. As the poor are pauperized and debased by any assistance which does not render them self-dependent, so is the home shorn of its greatest strength when its sacred obligations are relegated to another institution. The home must continue to be the educational institution *par excellence*, while the church, the school, and the state must rally to its aid, if only for their own self preservation; but their support must be of such a character as shall recognize its needful supremacy, and reinforce its dignity and its power to maintain it.

Many people seem to assume that education

begins with the child's entrance into the school room, but, in point of fact, it commences in the cradle, and children learn many rudimentary principles long before they can talk. During childhood the young have a multitude of teachers whose methods are of the best, and whose success is always assured. Their ends, whether good or bad, are invariably attained. They work unceasingly during every waking moment, and all we can do is to secure the conditions under which these influences act favorably to the child's best development; like a mirror, he reflects his surroundings most truthfully. Chief among these teachers are Observation, Imitation, and Habit.

#### OBSERVATION.

If it were possible for us to remember and relate first impressions, we would be much astonished to learn how early observation begins to act its part. Shortly after birth the child notices light, then color—red or yellow being the first to attract attention. So important and lasting are these first sense experiences that the kindergarten suspends a red or yellow ball over the cradle as the preliminary step in

that color training of which they are so justly proud. Statistics show that children thus trained are rarely if ever color blind. Of course other sense impressions, notably that of touch, are equally permanent and vivid—that of sight being prominently mentioned because it is a familiar illustration of this principle.

#### IMITATION.

As the child grows older the power of observation grows. Appearance and actions are noted and distinguished and at a very early age he begins to imitate what he observes. It is impossible to over-estimate the power acquired from this second teacher. Imitation has been the chief agency in making the world what it is to-day, and to it you and I owe our customs, our dress, and our habits of life. Without it the human race would still be merely animals, and our little animal, the child, would be incapable of education. To be sure, he cannot learn in our adult way but only as a child. Things of an abstract nature are unnoticed by him, but he observes and imitates all he sees and hears; nothing objective escapes him. This suggests the keynote of all successful training. The child

is influenced by *what we do*; hence the necessity of absolute honesty and genuine kindness in the home and in the school room. Do we wish him to be truthful, to respect law, to love his neighbor as himself? All these things must be seen in his own home and in the school, for the child reflects with unerring accuracy, not what he is told, but what he sees others do.

Everyone knows of the imitative power of the Chinese, and some will recall the anecdote of the California mistress who, upon the departure of Kate, her Irish cook, installed the second girl, the celestial John, in the kitchen. At the end of the week came the usual supply of groceries which the new cook was directed to put away "just as Kate did," and forthwith commenced a most startling performance. John proceeded to take toll of every article before placing it in its proper receptacle. First a few ounces of butter were taken from a roll, wrapped in paper and placed under one end of a couch; a handful of tea disappeared as if by magic in a glass jar behind the wood box, and in a few minutes all the petty dishonesties of months stood disclosed. John understood a little English but Kate's words had made slight impression on him. It



was her actions that were painted indelibly on his mind.

It is so with the infant child. Words are, comparatively speaking, unnoticed, but what we do, the concrete, is closely observed and imitated. These earliest impressions are the deepest and last the longest. When the mind becomes enfeebled by age or disease it loses its latest acquisitions first. Very old people recall with accuracy occurrences of early childhood, while the events of later years are entirely forgotten. *It is this fact that makes the good home so important and so sacred.*

If the relationship suggested in the first chapter has been faithfully maintained during infancy there exists a sympathetic understanding in the home which is unattainable under other conditions. As all the manifestations of spirit must be made by and through our physical bodies, so all our affections must have a sense basis from which, under proper care, they develop healthily and normally. It is generally when the affections are arrested in this early stage that a human being becomes a materialist in doctrine and a sensualist in practice.

As has been said, the best teacher for the lit-

tle child is a good mother. The world, it is true, is full of noble foster parents but every fiber in the child's body yearns for sympathy, a mother's love, and long before he is able to express himself in words he knows by instinct whether the arms that encircle him are his mother's. Nothing can take the place of this sympathy, and no human being can become a complete substitute for the mother. A weak, careless mother may be better for the child than a good teacher or family relative.

It is generally supposed that the child who loses its mother at birth and falls into the hands of a good step-mother never knows the difference, and it is often asserted that the young step-mother feels the same affection for the little orphan as for her own offspring. Such a condition seldom exists. Nature never intended that a relationship so sacred should be counterfeited. In an orphan asylum the children are generally better fed, better clothed, and better cared for than they ever were in their own homes. The nurses love and caress them, but upon every face, even of the babies, is a certain pathetic expression which shows the unconscious craving for mother's love. As well

might one say that the hapless chick hatched in an incubator is as happy and comfortable as one born under more natural conditions, as to say that human babyhood perfectly fulfills its destiny save in its mother's arms.

Some time ago six little children attended a certain school. The father was a drunkard, the mother washed for their daily bread, and the children were ragged and dirty (before they entered and had received clothing from the teachers.) The matron of a benevolent institution undertook to place them in a better environment, and called upon the teachers for their help in making the transfer. To her astonishment they declined, giving as their reason that the children loved their mother dearly and were happy in their attachment to one another. True, they would have had better clothes, better food, and a cleaner home, but after all, parental love "is the fulfilling of the law" during the child's period of nurture.

We are often much amused at the child's power of imitation, and nowhere is this more strikingly shown than in his play. We are coming to realize that play is the child's best teacher. Watch the baby girl as she washes

and dresses her doll, prepares its imaginary meal, takes it out for a walk. Every act is a copy of what she sees in the home, and all is a preparation for the duties of later life.

But play means more than this.

Every child, in a sense, goes through the mental and physical experiences of the race. Proof of this theory is traced in children's games, each of which is supposed to indicate the period of development of the child at that time. For instance, we find our boy at one time with an inclination to live in caves; at another he delights in pursuit and capture; at another, in deeds of bravery. These are generally thought to be mere games which the child selects by chance or in imitation of other children, without regard to their order of development; but, in point of fact, each of these games is indicative of a certain period in the race's history. The child plays at being a robber because he is, at that time, living the experiences of the race at the time when all were robbers. When he plays at being a tramp he is in the stage in which his ancestors were migratory. These phases of civilization show more plainly and last longer with some children than with others,

but all have them in greater or less degree. They promote healthy and normal growth. The only possible danger in indulging them is that the mind may be arrested in one or the other of these stages. The child, whose body grows to manhood while his mind remains in the migratory period, becomes a tramp; if he does not develop beyond the predatory age he becomes a robber, and so on. A criminal, as said before, is an example of arrested moral development. In the next chapter we shall consider the means of preventing this arrest; but we will now return to our subject.

#### HABIT.

The child's teachers considered thus far are Observation, Imitation, and Plays. Few appreciate the immense importance of these factors in the child's education, and still fewer understand that he learns far more from his games and other associations with children, than from any school yet organized.

The ease with which the child forms habits is another peculiarity which renders the first ten years so important. Perhaps no one has ever given the physiological basis of habit bet-

ter than Dr. James, of Harvard University. He says, in effect, that all sensations enter through the senses—such as the sense of touch, or sight, or hearing. That which enters the brain must come out again. Now the pathway traversed by these discharged sensations becomes a habit if used often enough.

To explain more fully—Suppose a child sees or hears something which angers him. Instantly a message is flashed from a nerve center to the appropriate muscles telling the hand to strike, or the foot to kick. If this message is obeyed, a faint pathway through the brain is traced. The next similar feeling of anger transmits a similar message and the obedient muscles again strike or kick. The same path is traversed by this second discharge, and the channel is worn a little deeper. Suppose this line of action is followed day after day. Is it not clear that after a time the child will kick or strike automatically whenever he is angered? This automatic impulse is a habit.

The reason habits are so easily formed in childhood lies in the fact that more blood is supplied to the brain during this period, and the brain is softer and more plastic. For this rea-

son, too, the habits and impressions of infancy and youth are the strongest, those which come to us last being the first to leave.

These physiological facts are of great moment, and suggest that moral teaching is made most effective by personal example. The child is interested in the object, the concrete, and imitates what he sees. Let him observe our gentleness or truthfulness and he will follow that, if it is not beyond his power to appreciate.

*Every good impulse should find outlet in an appropriate action, else it is lost and the capability for future good impulses is weakened.* So if the child reads a touching story, sees a pathetic play, or is touched by some scene of suffering, the feeling of pity thus aroused should find an outlet in some kind action, even though trivial. In this way the *habit* of alleviating suffering is formed, which will grow with the child's growth, unless we drain his sympathies by too early and too active stimulation.

There is great danger of this latter, especially when the child is particularly susceptible to feeling keenly the sufferings of others. Precocity in any direction should not be encouraged, for the child pays dearly for it in later

life. Remember that it is the business of the first twelve years to cultivate a healthy, happy body as the foundation of later muscular strength and nerve force. But let us remember to cultivate this healthy body by exercising it in giving utterance to good impulses through appropriate action.

The dawn of the higher emotional nature comes with the dawn of the period of adolescence, and the child should enter this period of his life with emotions fresh, and with fancy free. Undue excitement, undue stimulation of any sort is largely responsible for the jaded, blasé little men and women one so often meets.

Some times the children are so overworked that they have no nerve force left for the duties or enjoyments of later years. What is taken for indifference or cynicism is really fatigue. Often a baby of three or four years is enrolled in a kindergarten; he loves the teacher, and the games and the community life appeal to him. His naturally bright mind becomes still brighter under this stimulation. At six he enters the primary school and continues to delight both mother and teacher until he reaches the third or fourth grade, and then our prodigy begins



to show an alarming change. The lessons once so easy are dull and difficult. The teacher whose room he has just entered does not "understand him." She fails "to explain" sufficiently, and school becomes hateful to him.

The difficulty lies in the fact that the child is simply worn out. All the strength and nerve force which should have been stored up for the wear and tear of later years has been exhausted by his too early application to work. He is not able to go on any more than a locomotive is able to move after the supply of coal and water is exhausted. Everyone is familiar with examples of this kind, and many know, also, that statistics show that the child entering school under seven loses in weight and is retarded in growth during the first year. Who will make the application? Is it not possible that the conditions for "race suicide" begin right here?

#### LAW OF ASSOCIATION.

The fourth and last teacher to be mentioned is the law of association, which means that if two things are once associated together in the mind the later appearance of one will recall the other. This principle is wonderfully useful in

many ways by helping to fix or recall that which we wish to remember, but, like every other good thing, it is capable of working mischief under unfavorable conditions. We let the child play in a certain room some morning. Our return to the room a week after recalls the play to the child's mind even though it may not have occurred to him in the meantime. And it is surprising how soon these associations are formed. A romp with the pillows at bedtime brings a request for a romp the next night.

Good or bad, happy or sad, these connected pictures are constantly forming the child's mind and it is for us to see to it that, so far as possible, they are happy and good. Even very young animals show the influence of this law. Their tricks are learned by means of certain associations, and many have heard of the horse (not young) which was loaned to a clergyman who wished to take his friend for a drive. The road chosen happened to be one often traversed by the horse's owner, and the clergyman's chagrin may be imagined as the faithful animal, of its own accord, would draw up to every public house on the road. So if children are allowed to play in a certain street, or garden, or

building, a later return to this place will recall the occupations associated with it, and render a different train of thought difficult to follow.

Human intelligence presents many strange inconsistencies. This law of association, though often disregarded in training children, is well understood and keenly followed in its relation to other interests. This is particularly true in an army. Visit a fort at sundown when the flag is being lowered. Observe the order and precision in every movement, the martial music, the bared head, the respectful silence as the sacred emblem flutters to the ground. All this ceremony and parade are not for appearance only; they have a far deeper meaning. Everything pertaining to the flag is treated with the greatest respect and formality. Why? So that in every phase of the soldier's life the presence of the flag shall recall the feelings with which it has been associated. This is absolutely necessary to the unity and strength of the army. How long would any people remain united if their flag was treated with disrespect?

So too with the religious emotions. Better a thousand times that no prayer be offered, no hymn sung, than to conduct any religious exer-

cise with children who are laughing and chattering. They should never believe that prayer or praise to God can be offered under such conditions. When once the child makes this irreverent association in his mind he has taken a long step in the direction of irreligion and unbelief.

#### RESUME.

1. The child's education commences as soon as he begins to take notice, and his character is largely formed before he enters school.

2. The child is interested in the concrete, the objective; he therefore, pays more attention to actions than to words.

3. The chief factors in his education are observation, association, habit, and games and plays.\*

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\*Consult the following for further suggestions: *Study of Imitation*--Annual Report Commissioner of Education, Vol. I, 1896-97, chapter 13; *Industrial Education*, same, page 443; *College Athletics*, same, page 705; *Physical Training*, Annual Reports of Commissioner of Education, 1898, Vol. I, page 487; *Babies and Monkeys*--Popular Science Monthly, Jan., 1895, Vol. 46, page 371; *The Boyhood of Great Men*, Annual Report of Education, 1898, Vol. 2, page 1294; *The Sorrows of Childhood*, Atlantic Monthly, Vol. 9.

## WHAT THE CHILD SHOULD LEARN. 41

### IV.

## WHAT THE CHILD SHOULD LEARN.

"A little natural philosophy and the first entrance into it doth dispose the opinion to atheism; but on the other side, much natural philosophy and the wading deep into it will bring men's minds to religion."—*Bacon*.

IT IS generally admitted that the first nine years of life are the most important from an educational point of view, but comparatively few are equally clear as to the time when the child's education really begins. Fewer still have decided convictions as to *where* he should begin. Many suppose his entrance into the kindergarten or the primary school marks the beginning of this important work, while others place it at a still later period.

The child enters the world in a perfectly helpless condition. Practically he is blind, deaf and dumb; unconscious of any object—even of himself. Gradually the outer world is revealed to him through the sense of touch. This awakens desire or inclination. His education commences the moment this inclination or desire encounters opposition, and its trend is deter-

mined by the manner in which the obstacle is surmounted.

Thus a very young babe is rocked to sleep, or carried to and fro. A few experiences of this nature teach him the pleasurable sensation of motion and he refuses to be lulled to sleep by other means. Whether it is physiologically harmful to rock a child to sleep or to walk about with him is not now the question. Do his desires conflict with the parent's will? Here his education begins. It is his first lesson in obedience, and according to its method he takes his first step downward toward self-indulgence and ruin, or upward toward self-control. Whether we will it or not, we find ourselves confronted, from birth to old age, by obstacles which we must surmount or to which we must yield. The decision as to which ones shall be overcome, and which shall be permitted to prevail against us, constitute the chief problem of life. The ability to overcome or to yield as judgment may direct, can only be gained through self-control, and self-control comes only through practice in obedience to law. Law must come to the child, at first, from without. Later he finds it within; he becomes a law unto himself. *But until the*

*knowledge of the truth has made him free he must obey external law.*

Now it would be the height of folly to assume that all children learn the lessons of obedience with equal ease or in the same time. Heredity and environment each exerts its influence and very much depends upon the wisdom of those who enforce the obedience. The requirements at first should be few and simple, so as not to perplex or distress the little ones needlessly; but when once the decision has been made obedience should be secured. Under such conditions it is cruelly wrong to issue unnecessary prohibitions. The best and wisest of us often err in this respect because our childhood is so far behind us that we have only a misty recollection of the sharp struggles and the keen disappointments of infancy. It is the only safe rule never to say "No" or "Yes" to a child unless we have a good reason for doing so. Of course conflict is inevitable here. Perfect agreement between the parent's will and the child's would show the inability of the child to choose,—a condition bordering on imbecility— or else the governing power would need to be omniscient, while the governed would need the

ability to recognize this omniscience under all conditions, coupled with a self-control so marvelous that he could at all times subjugate his desire to his judgment—conditions impossible alike to the adult and the child. But the necessity for this struggle should cause us no anxiety; it should be welcomed rather as nature's method of growth. No opposition, no combat; no combat, no growth. Every square foot of earth proclaims this universal law of nature; every plant, every animal, every insect living upon the earth is living because of its ability to maintain this conflict. Man is no exception to this law. Every muscle, every nerve and brain cell in his body is subject to this law of growth manifest in all other forms of life, while our moral and spiritual development are alike dependent upon the same all embracing principle. "To the stars through difficulties."

#### USE AND ABUSE OF PUNISHMENT.

Since the fundamental principle of growth, physical and spiritual, is obedience to law, it follows that the first lesson for those who know not the law, must be that of obedience to some force or power outside of themselves and



quite other than their will or desire. Of course at a later period the element of choice enters into this conformity, but now they are receiving their first lesson in obedience to the will of another. Judgment has not yet become active. The child is incapable of any real choice; so the first page of life's primer demands obedience *per se*, and it must be mastered thoroughly if he would read the succeeding chapters understandingly. The child may not wish to obey. Inclination is strong and he feels no need of disregarding it. Compulsion may become necessary, and this brings us face to face with the question of punishments.

Punishments are generally of two classes: (1) the deprivation of certain privileges, as the forfeiting of a coveted outing, or the omission of the bed-time story. (2) In the second class are included all attempts to "make the punishment fit the crime." The floor littered with bits of paper must be restored to its former condition; injury to property must be repaired to the extent of the offender's ability—the object being to awaken the child's mind to a recognition of the rights of others, and at the same time teach him to feel that wrong-doing always

brings with it the need of reparation. This latter class of punishment is in all respects most logical and salutary, but there are cases—but not many—where neither of these methods seems efficacious, and appeal is made to physical pain or discomfort.

Of Corporal Punishment so much has been said in recent years, and the matter is so important, that it behooves us to look into the subject with some care. The objections made to this mode of correction are as follows:—

First—The sensation of physical pain is evanescent; it passes off more quickly than any other of equal intensity.

Second—Physical pain causes a great destruction of nerve tissue, and is, therefore, from an economic standpoint, a most expensive and unwarranted method of correction.

Third—It is merely an appeal to our animal nature, and, for this reason, it is degrading and brutalizing.

Fourth—Real obedience, that of the heart, is never gained through corporal punishment.

Fifth—The highest and noblest efforts possible to man are obtained through interest—*i. e.*, our best is attained only under pleasurable conditions.

Sixth—Corporal punishment attacks and dulls the child's sense of honor.

Let us consider these objections for a moment, at the same time bearing two cautions in mind: First, that nothing is so false, so deceptive, as a half truth; second, that blind adherence to any principle, especially when accompanied, as it often is, by a disregard of co-operating or adjusting laws, must necessarily result in injury if not in the total subversion of the principle.

As to the first objection, that physical pain is the most fleeting of all sensations, little need be said since the argument is in favor of rather than opposed to its use. No one would wish to inflict any sort of punishment that could last an instant longer than the purpose of it rendered necessary.

The alleged destruction of nerve tissue, so far as it is true, is a far more serious charge against this means of coercion, but it should be understood, clearly and unmistakably, that the brutal and unmerited whippings of a former generation are not considered, and therefore not reckoned with in these pages; for them no excuse can be offered save ignorance and that mysteri-

ous and all pervading influence generally known as "the spirit of the times."

History teaches that severity is not necessary to the efficacy of punishment—rather the contrary—its chief requirements being justice, certainty, and, above all, *a perfect adaptation to the physical and mental status of the culprit*. Now if we admit that the human child is in the beginning merely an animal and that his spiritual nature is a potentiality to become a reality through a process of growth, there must be a mixture of physical and spiritual influences used in his correction. This evolution may be rapid or comparatively slow, being dependent upon heredity and environment. Some unfortunate beings seem to be arrested in this animal stage, and to remain in it all their lives (as is true of many criminals), while others born under happier conditions appear to grow out of it very early. Now while the animal nature predominates appeal may be made through physical pain and discomfort, but it should give place to other means as rapidly as the higher nature is awakened and the child becomes amenable to higher motives for right conduct. The infant has no idea of moral duty, and a few light slaps

of the hand with a reproving countenance are often the only argument the very young child can understand. Such admonition best fits the conditions.

A kind-hearted and able physician once stated that when the little body was stiffened with anger, the limbs rigid and the face red with congested blood, a few light slaps upon the lower part of the body, acting as a counter irritant, gave the best possible relief to the overcharged blood vessels, producing a similar effect to that produced by the mustard plaster. With the average child the necessity for this mode of punishment ought to disappear gradually, and should seldom be necessary after the ninth or tenth year.

Many, of course, will not need it at all; but it is to be feared their number is smaller than maternal affection or sentiment leads some to think. Our chief difficulty in child training seems to lie in the inability to see that the child grows in a regular and well defined order. Stage follows stage in an appointed succession, and each stage should receive the treatment adapted to it. While it may be possible, by judicious care, to make this progression from

stage to stage more rapid, it is also possible that under certain other conditions this natural advancement may be retarded or even checked altogether by injudicious treatment.

Be this as it may, nothing can be gained by urging ethical motives for conduct before the ethical nature has budded, for we know that any hot-house forcing of spiritual growth is fatal to later development. All danger signals must be regarded, and so far as human wisdom can discern, the proper remedy for each stage should be provided. The immature nature capable of appreciating only physical sensations, must be appealed to through his physical sensations, and neither affection nor vanity should lead us to suppose that the child we love so tenderly is to develop under different laws from those which govern and always have governed the race.

All this may sound despotic to advanced notions of child education, and more applicable to a primitive age, or to a military form of government than to a free republic, but if evolution is the law of the universe, does it not suggest that the child, passing through the different experiences of the race, can be restrained best

in each stage of development by the means that have been adopted by the best and most intelligent of the race at each corresponding step in human history? Despotism appeals to physical pain seem to have been the earliest means of control employed by any people. Though advancement has greatly modified these elementary practices, is it not probable that the young child passes through enough of this early experience of the race to render a touch of them salutary?

Does it seem irrational to conclude that a being in whom the animal nature is so prominent as in the young child can be best controlled, sometimes, through his physical sensations? Will not his adherence to law, in future years, be stronger and more enduring because it has grown, step by step, from this physical basis in accord with what seems to be a law of both our physical and spiritual development?

It is useless for parent or teacher to ignore the fact that children must grow according to natural laws. As well might the frog refuse to pass its childhood as a tadpole, or the butterfly to crawl before it flies, as for man to refuse to recognize that he begins life as an animal, and

that his transformation into a spiritual being is by a slow process of growth out of the animal into the spiritual.

The most serious defect in our system at present seems to lie in the very general effort to present ethical motives for conduct before the ethical nature is sufficiently developed to appreciate them. History reveals the fact that no race of people has exhibited the highest standard of virtue in its childhood. It has grown slowly, step by step. What reason have we to suppose that our embryo man can spring full-fledged into a virtuous manhood? And can it be brutalizing to use the means of correction which best answer to his stage of growth? It would be brutal to retain this mode of punishment after the child is capable of responding to higher motives, and the higher motive should be employed as soon as it can be appreciated and it should be presented to him repeatedly before he can appreciate it.

It is true, to be sure, that genuine obedience, obedience that springs from the heart, is not the direct result of coercion. But the child does not rise to this plane of duty at a bound. This moral excellence is a superstructure whose



foundation is obedience to external authority which has become habit in childhood. To ignore this order of growth is an error too prevalent in the education of the young.

Then, too, we are prone to lay great stress upon the pleasure of work, the value of interest, its effect upon effort, etc. While all this emphasis cannot be laid too early, and too much cannot be said in favor of it, there is another truth equally important which the present generation is in danger of forgetting—the important part which struggle plays in the child's development.

One thinker has said that the child gains his moral strength through the conflict of his own will with that of his parents; and he adds "that as the child progresses toward manhood he should gradually gain his freedom, lest he know not how to use his liberty upon reaching maturity, and how to govern others having never governed himself." He declares that "self-government is first dependent upon that implicit obedience in childhood to a higher will which leads to self-control; and second, to judicious freedom in thought and conduct which, being gained slowly and by degrees, gives scope to

the judgment. Success in life, great or small, is determined by the degree of self-control that has been acquired.

The assertion that corporal punishment dulls the child's sense of honor implies that the sense of honor has awakened in the child. When this sense has become active, corporal punishment is never the remedy. But the humiliation that attends the violation of one's sense of personal dignity or honor is not possible to a child who has no such sense. When it is once awakened the child can be better controlled by other influences.

Much has been said about the decline of parental authority during the past quarter of the century. There are grounds for this charge. Not least among these is the fact that parents of the generation now reaching maturity received a training in which one of the elements of leadership was lacking;—that of freedom. Fifty years ago a child in a well ordered home was “seen but not heard.” But when that generation neared the age when self-assertion is beneficial, pedagogy took a turn:—the little child came to the front and has remained there ever since as leader of the procession. As a natural

consequence the mothers of the present day have remained in the background. They received the necessary training in obedience, but the freedom which should have come later was denied them. They never "came out" until called to assume the leadership of their own home. Is it any wonder that judgment was sometimes lacking? The men of this age found a partial corrective in their earlier and more active contact with the outer world, but the error has affected with full force the more secluded girl just budding into womanhood.

This lack, however, will not be felt by many of the children now nearing maturity. In a majority of cases they have enjoyed unlimited freedom from babyhood, the preliminary training in obedience having been eliminated from their education. Modern sentiment is prone to revolt from suppression of any kind. It would be wrong to deny that many advantages have accrued to children under this freer dispensation, but the evidence is cumulative that freedom without obedience will always prove as great an evil as obedience without freedom. Life is a partial failure everywhere without both.

The leading objectors to corporal punishment are not always our ablest thinkers. With honorable exceptions they are persons engaged in occupations offering little opportunity for intelligent personal investigation of the subject. This retards true progress for the reason that there is always a large number of people who are easily swayed by what seems to them to be public opinion because it happens to be the only opinion publicly expressed at the time. We should be slow to abolish by law this mode of correction from the school where children of all stages of development are grouped together under teachers who, in their efforts to maintain the required discipline, are often led to the adoption of means far less honorable and efficacious; such as pinching, jerking, shaking, holding up to ridicule, shutting in the dark, and "nagging;" practices too often the recourse of those whose poor health, lack of pedagogical training, or overcrowded school room, make coercion necessary to secure order.

But, it must be borne in mind that corporal punishment loses its efficacy as the child gains in appreciation of higher motives for conduct. Punishment, to be effective, should be:

First, certain. The element of uncertainty often seems to awaken in the child a desire to see how far and how long he can disobey with impunity. The same impulse which induces an older person to bet on the board of trade, or to frequent the gaming tables at Monte Carlo, will lead the boy to take chances on his teacher's patience or powers of endurance. Punishment should be certain for many reasons.

Second, it should be just. History shows no bloodier page than that which records the race's struggle for fair treatment; and no effort at restraint which lacks this element is effective for long. Though our ethical standard is higher than his, the child's moral sense is often keener than ours. His horizon is narrow and, therefore, he should be encouraged to state his view of the matter and punishment should not be administered until there is sufficient evidence that the child believes it to be just.

Third, it should be adapted to the child's development. It is the height of cruelty to force upon the child motives he cannot understand. It is brutal to continue a mode of punishment that he has outgrown. Sound judgment and a kind heart should determine both the rewards

and the punishments of the school, and they should be the sound judgment and kind heart of the teacher in charge. Farming out children for punishment to the principal or superintendent does not strengthen the teacher and is generally harmful to the child.

#### OTHER PUNISHMENTS.

The same general principles apply to all forms of punishment, inasmuch as all are for the same purpose; and it need hardly be said that the mildest means that will accomplish the desired end are always the best. Few realize the suffering of a nervous child put to bed in the dark or shut up in closet. Tantalizing, taunting and exposing to ridicule are especially reprehensible.

Whatever the means of correction used it must be remembered that its efficacy will depend not only upon the spirit and manner of it, but also upon its infrequency.

When the French Revolution was at its height, once sensitive ladies attended public executions, calmly sipping coffee as they witnessed the most revolting acts of cruelty. We express horror at the brutality of our ancestors,

but we should soon find ourselves doing the same thing under similar conditions, simply because any experience, pleasurable or painful, will affect us less the second time when it did the first; every repetition lessens the effect until we become in a measure indifferent to what were once intense feelings.

This law must be taken into the account in the child's training, since we are apt, otherwise, to render him callous to all the means we employ for his improvement. Wisdom and self-control are never more necessary than when we attempt to correct the fault of another. It is also well to remember that the immature mind is not always the inferior mind. Superiority in age, the relation to parent or teacher, or any other exterior condition will not give us governing power unless we have learned to govern ourselves.

"Punishments as seen by Children" *Pedagogical Seminary*, Vol. 3, P. 235; "Educative Value of Children's Questioning" *Popular Science Monthly*, XLIV, P. 799; "Child Study & Religious Education" *Child Study Monthly*, Oct. 1896, Vol. 2, P. 289; "Fatigue in School Children" *Educational Review*, Jan. 1898, P. 34; the Public School and the Public Library" Annual Report Commissioner of Education 1898, Vol. 1, P. 487; "The History of Sunday Schools" Annual report Com. of Education 1896-97, Vol. 1, P. 351.

## CHAPTER V.

## WHAT THE CHILD SHOULD LEARN.—

*Continued.*

IF WE believe that among the first lessons the child must learn, is obedience, pure and simple, the next matter for our consideration is the direction this obedience shall take. The child advances from the general to the specific application of this law and learns by degrees that while he is expected to follow the actual guidance of those around him, there are certain acts which are always forbidden because of some inherent quality in themselves. This would cover such infringements of the moral law, as stealing, lying, and the like.

## STEALING.

Of course, the little child at first knows no distinction between his property and another's. He learns this chiefly from the way in which his belongings are considered. His treatment of his neighbor in adult life depends very



much upon these first experiences in the home. Why should we expect him to grow in respect for the property of others when his treasures are kicked about, or thrown away, or given to younger brothers or sisters without reference to his wishes? He learns by what he sees more than by what we tell him, and if his property is respected, he gradually grows into a respect for the property of others. By degrees this distinction may become sharp and clear; then the chances are that in manhood he will have regard for the Golden Rule.

Nearly all the confusion between capital and labor has had its counterpart in the child's experiences during the first ten years of his life. If his rights are ignored, why should he not show the same disregard for the rights of others? At first it shows itself in appropriating the things belonging to others, which grows into a general disrespect for others' rights, and an inability to appreciate what is due to them. It has been observed that children whose families have been pauperized by the injudicious charity of churches and benevolent societies are generally not regardful of property rights. This does not necessarily arise from any inher-

ent dishonesty; it simply means that false kindness has prevented any sharp distinction between mine and thine from getting a lodgment in their convictions, and they feel at liberty to appropriate whatever seems desirable without any very great consideration of the owners' wishes. Children who are not paupers frequently show this lack of training in other ways:—fences are marked, lawns trampled, and we look on with good natured indifference, failing to recognize that this small and apparently unimportant disregard of property rights is the nucleus of future oppression and strife. Later experience may lead him to a recognition of such of these principles as are necessary to success in business, but a real, genuine consideration for others must be taught in babyhood and preserved as a possession of inestimable value throughout the years of growth, if it shall become an ingredient of the character.

Dr. G. Stanley Hall in his suggestive paper on "Children's Lies" gives an insight into this subject not realized before, and which every teacher of children should carefully study. It is true of all animals that they lie, so far as their intelligence permits, and man inherits his

full share of this propensity, without the animal's excuse that it is now necessary to his survival. The instinct can be suppressed most easily in early childhood.

In the animal world are seen many evidences of this instinct to deceive. Spiders feign death in times of danger, a habit followed by many small animals and insects. Birds resort to all sorts of tricks to divert an enemy's attention from their nests; while the fox, the dog, and many others do their part in maintaining this characteristic whenever self-preservation or interest renders it desirable or necessary. The little child, at first, lies as innocently as other animals, which of course is no lie in the moral sense of the word.

Then the time comes when the imagination begins to bud, and some children find it hard to distinguish between what actually occurred and what he imagines occurred. And, too, there is that inability to relate occurrences accurately which is, in some degree, the effect of deficient sense training, and memory. A short time ago a daily paper gave an abstract of a lecture on lying in which the speaker deplored the "fatal tendency" of children to imitate and spoke

at length of all their little games, such as keeping house, playing school, tending baby and the like, as the beginning of this sinful habit. De-luded soul, he failed to see that the whole race learns by imitation. The ability to imitate intelligently has brought Japan to the front, while the inability to imitate keeps the barbarian barbarous.

If the hypothesis that man inherits a tendency to lie in common with other animals is excepted, then he must pass through this stage of race experience, as he does through his nomadic and robber stages. No danger need be felt for the normal child with proper training. It is the child who is arrested in this stage that becomes and remains a liar. Of course we all see the preventive. The child must live in an atmosphere of truthfulness. His gift of imitation enables him to follow what he sees, and this gradually crystallizes into habit, forming a good foundation for the ethical training of later years. It is easy to preach to or nag a young child until he becomes either a hypocrite or a coward, or to punish so severely as to make him an accomplished liar. But few, if any, can withstand the warm, sunny influence of a kind and

truthful home or school. There are times when it becomes necessary to punish falsehood; but it is well to know first what is in the child's mind before doing it. A kind, sympathetic talk with him will often reveal ideas or deductions unsuspected by the adult mind, which show a conscience void of offense. Surely it is worth the trouble.

On the other hand, many a young schemer is most artful in his attempts to deceive. It is most important that this type of child should not be allowed to escape the teachers' or the parents' vigilance. It is he that swells the mournful army of swindlers and defaulters found in the various avenues of business.

We place many obstacles in the child's way. The deceptions of social and business life, the daily insincerities which the average person practices almost unconsciously, all these puzzle and bewilder the immature mind. Surely we who provide these conditions should be fair, and act as truthfully as we would have him do.

### SELFISHNESS.

Selfishness in the young child is merely the instinct of self-preservation which he shares in

common with other animals. At first it is perfectly right and natural; he grows out of it gradually as the altruistic attributes of his nature and feelings of sympathy begin to assert themselves. Too strenuous and too early efforts to teach him generosity, self-denial, and the like, react dangerously later on. His attempts in this direction should be few and simple, at first, and of such a nature as to give him pleasure. To illustrate: A short time ago a neighbor's little son reached his fifth birthday. An aunt sent him a small, heart-shaped box of bon-bons. In the afternoon a few friends called. "Pass your pretty candies to the ladies," said his mother, with the result that only two poor little gum drops were left in the box. Now don't you think this was a hard lesson for the average boy? His mother wished him to grow up a noble, unselfish man. What do you think of her methods? Is she likely to succeed in her effort?

The Christian religion sometimes requires us to give up all we hold dear; but we rarely meet this demand cheerfully at five. The average child loves to share his possessions occasionally; let him begin by doing so in small meas-

ure, at first—so small that his sense of loss or deprivation is counterbalanced by the sympathetic pleasure he feels—until the altruistic nature begins to assert itself.

## FIGHTING.

Reference has been made to the instinct of self-preservation. This shows itself in various ways. At a very early age the child tries to defend himself, to protect his property, or to acquire something which instinct teaches him is desirable, and he does it by means of the only weapons known to him—his teeth, hands, and feet—he fights. Remember, he is yet only a little animal and seeks to preserve himself as other animals do. This is, therefore, a perfectly normal effort in line with all the instincts which preserve animal life from extinction. The child must pass through this stage. Nations have not yet passed beyond it. If he is arrested in it he will go through life a brute. Repugnant as it may be to our feelings the child must be allowed this experience. It is necessary to his moral growth; it is the natural and healthy foundation of the mental and moral struggle

which every man maintains if he prove successful in the battle of life. This period is passed more quickly by some temperaments than by others, but evidences of its existence are most noticeable in the third or fourth year of school life.

Perhaps most of the nations do, or have done, their bitterest fighting at the time when the great majority of the people are or were in the same stage of intelligence as our average boy of ten or twelve. The child at this age has a keen and somewhat poetic sense of justice. Loss must be compensated and wrong punished without delay. He is in the period of muscle training also, and at once proceeds to set matters right in the only way that appeals to him. One reason that he appreciates Buffalo Bill stories and others of their kind so keenly is found in the swift and summary punishment meted out to all offenders. The crude sense of justice depicted in this class of literature coincides exactly with his own half-developed ideas, and the lurid scenes of bravery and bloodshed do not seem exaggerated or impossible to his childish fancy because he lives in a world of imagination where the marvelous is always commonplace.



Fairy tales are absorbed eagerly at this age and earlier. Red Riding Hood is a great favorite with the child of six or eight, and his sigh of relief when the wicked wolf is dispatched is an unfailing indication of his sense of justice satisfied. Jack the Giant Killer answers the same need. It seems only logical to meet this craving with the best stories of the races' great battles. Carthage and Rome will fascinate him, and the Old Testament wars will appeal to him more strongly now than a few years later, for the reason that he is in about the same stage of spiritual development as the people of whom he is reading and is, therefore, ready to sympathize with them most keenly.

Later on he will, of course, appreciate the grandeur and sublimity of the Old Testament, its lofty ideals, and noble purposes, in a manner and degree now impossible; but just now he takes this initial and most important step in his study of the Bible. He is learning to live it, to sympathize with it, to see the harmony between its narrative and his own experience. For this reason the child should read the Old Testament first, reserving the altru-

istic teaching of the New Testament for the period of adolescence when the altruistic qualities become active.

Reference to literature is made in this connection merely to show why the child prefers stories of conflict at this age. If this craving is indulged judiciously, and he is allowed to fight, when he believes he is fighting for justice and right, he passes through this stage of development safely, and is stronger and more wholesome for the experience. It is well, perhaps, that nature asserts herself so vigorously in this matter that the average boy follows her promptings in spite of the maternal dictum that "no matter what happens, little son mustn't fight."

After many years spent in the school room, the writer can recall but one instance in which a mother succeeded in enforcing this command literally and absolutely, and is thankful that she can recall no more. The victim, when she first met him, was a boy of fourteen, very tall, well proportioned, with excellent features and good coloring, gentlemanly in manner, the pleasing effect of which was somewhat marred by a general limpness, both mental and

physical, which was at once explained when, after some indignity offered by smaller boys, the mother explained, "My son is preparing for the ministry; no matter what the boys do to him, he cannot fight, he has never struck anyone in his life." In vain the teacher pleaded for a saner and more logical treatment. The result may be imagined. As the others learned the situation, George became the butt of the school. Every indignity was offered which ingenuity could invent, and at the close of each session he generally ran across the fields followed by a crowd of nimble tormenters. Years have passed and George is now a man, probably in the ministry, and it would be interesting to know how well the dignity of the church militant is maintained by one who was never allowed to assert and defend his own.

Then, too, it must be remembered that boys do very much of their fighting simply to determine which is the better man; they are living in the period of conquest. The principal of the Grand Rapids Ungraded School reports an almost total cessation of street fights since the boys are allowed to box during the last fifteen to thirty minutes on Friday afternoon.

## VI.

## WHAT THE CHILD SHOULD LEARN.

(Continued.)

It has already been suggested that for the good of the nation, as well as the individual, children ought not to enter the school room before completing the eleventh year. It seems absurd to most readers to make a statement so directly opposed to the prevailing opinion. Emigration brings to our shores thousands of children whose first and only lessons in good citizenship are gained in the public schools during infancy or early childhood; then, there are other thousands of native born parents whose indifference, lack of preparation, of opportunity, or of money, renders them unfit or unable to assume the elementary education of their children. There is also the youthful army of bread-winners, whom stern necessity forces into our industrial life so early that they must attend school during childhood, if at all; and there, too, is the unfortunate only child whose early experience

in community life is gained almost entirely from the same source. Earnest and fair-minded parents entertain a wholesome fear of defects in education which may handicap their children in the "competitive examinations" which await them in every corner of the business world. It may be, therefore, that the contents of this chapter will be taken with many misgivings as to their common sense. Its suggestions must be modified and adapted to the environment of each individual child, if they shall prove of any value.

Ideal conditions surround the child when it feels the blessed influences of an intelligent and loving home. But these conditions are too seldom realized; so it comes to pass that the public school with all its imperfections becomes the chief instrumentality in the moulding and leavening process which converts the embryo anarchist into a loyal citizen, and imparts hope and intelligence to that great mass of humanity which, deprived of its influences, must live as the beast liveth. Most that can be done for the following generation is to come from considering all the conditions. We must estimate even the defects at their true value, and then

choose the best that each one's own peculiar circumstances render possible; remembering always that a blind adherence to any principle, however good, often defeats the end sought.

Since present public opinion requires children to attend school in their infancy, and since the average parent is not in a position to ignore this requirement without placing his children at great disadvantage, it follows that all desired change in the process of educating the young must be brought about by degrees.

Under present conditions the child is almost exclusively dominated by the feminine mind, and as this state of things will, in all probability, continue for some years, it becomes woman's duty to fit herself for the task. Motherhood will take on a higher and a holier significance as women learn better how to study their children from the standpoint of science as well as of sentiment. Sentiment is, of course, a most important factor in child training, but he who trusts to it entirely may be likened to a builder who fashions his structure without foundation or scaffolding.

An accurate knowledge of conditions and a true estimate of educational values are the greatest needs of the average woman. Without them we fail to recognize the relations of the part to the whole, and thus many a fundamental principle is ignored, many a defect disregarded, because its importance to the perfection of the structure is never suspected.

Take for illustration the universal instinct of children to destroy—a disposition prominently active at a certain stage of growth. It has its place and value, but must in a short time give place to another impulse. Failure to understand that this is a mere animal impulse is the cause of the unrestrained destruction of trees and shrubs, the mutilation of fences and buildings, long after this natural instinct should have been arrested. The American is a good natured soul, and sometimes too good-natured. The damage may be trifling. "Boys will be boys" parents say. They are indifferent, or ashamed to complain since popular sentiment is with the offender; so the child goes on his way, and no one seems to connect the utter disregard of life and property in later life with the pernicious, unchecked habit of child life.

Take another illustration. At five o'clock all street cars are crowded. A mother enters with a child for whom no fare will be paid, it being under age; the car becomes filled to overflowing, but the child retains its seat while some old person, perhaps, paying full fare is obliged to stand. Who can say that this may not be the first lesson in a long course of training which eventually produces the bank defaulter, or the cool, merciless speculator in the necessities of life? Would this mother so manifest her selfishness were she trained to see the connection between the numberless petty dishonesties of daily life, and the keen, systematic dishonesty which is practiced later? "It is the little foxes that spoil the vines."

We send the child to the kindergarten at four or five, and make the usual transition to the primary room later. What the active young body suffers from this "promotion" the adult does not appreciate. Seated before a desk, deprived of natural unrestrained freedom, he is suddenly put to the study of objects much smaller than anything previously considered by him. Letters, figures, alphabet cards, and the type of the ordinary reader are a severe tax



upon the strength and nervous energy of the little fellow whose eyes, unaccustomed through thousands of years of ancestral life to such exercise are now adapting their lenses slowly (few realize how slowly) to the requirements of civilized man. The great prevalence of diseases of the eyes among school children in later generations has a close connection with the too rapid adaptation of the "muscles of accommodation" to the work of the school.

Some of the present generation escape much of the senseless thralldom of our last two or three generations, for we are slowly growing in knowledge.

The educational value placed upon the study of numbers by the average school is out of all proportion to its real worth. True the "development" of the number *two* in the "baby class" was no longer continued after the fact was discovered that a canary bird knows the difference between one lump of sugar and two, and that the same remarkable perspicuity was observed in the case of young puppies. Some reckless individual, unknown to fame, hazarded the opinion that the number two is known to the child before he enters school. This settled

it. Hereafter school work might begin with "three." We are still giving the child much that would come to him naturally if he were allowed to wait until his mind was ready for it. Aye, there's the rub,—“when the mind is ready.” Children must be kept off the street five or six hours out of twenty-four. To do this we must keep them busy.

The educational possibilities of manual work and of gardening are known to but few even of the educators. Their equipment costs some money it is true, but not so much is needed as some localities expend. The study of arithmetic has a commercial value in the eyes of the father—who earns two dollars a day and has six children who must early learn the secret of “getting on in the world”—which surpasses that of manual training. Will money-making always compel us to tear the bud open before it is ready to bloom? What the little learner needs is to see the relations between things before he deals with ideas. Let him play (or work) with blocks until he knows beyond all possibility of doubt how one-third or one-fifth of a thing compares in size with the whole thing. Let

him learn this through the experiences of sight and touch, and a little later his mind will grasp the various combinations of numbers with a freedom and power unknown to the child who has juggled with figures until he is already a mental dyspeptic.

But we are forgetting that "seventy-five per cent of our pupils leave school at the completion of the fourth grade." Not so many as that, but many. Yet the gamin, or the beggar understands number to the extent of his necessity, which is often far beyond the attainments of the school-boy. What the child really needs is to feel that number, though abstract in itself, is connected with all the material things of life. So too of language; the sentence, or clause, or connective, whose dead form he sees laid out, as if for burial, on the pages of his grammar, lives and moves and has its being in the thought and feeling of the warm, pulsing myriads of human beings around him. These studies seem dry and hard because we give them to the child before they enter into his experience. We may sugar-coat them with attractive devices and colored chalk but, nine times out of ten, he is interested more in the

novelty or play of colors, than in the mathematical or grammatical facts they teach.

*Sometimes the child spends his time in class not in the search for truth so much as in trying to discover what his teacher would have him say.* That is, he learns to follow the workings of her mind rather than to develop the power of independent thought. This is not the best occupation for a human soul. It is, however, an excellent training for a puppet who is to spend its life either in the treadmill of fashionable society, or imprisoned in the shop or the factory. It is not expected that a machine shall think.

Parents often complain that their children are "so dreamy" in school. We never get nearer to heaven than in our day-dreams. They lift us from the material to the real; they perfume the lump of clay; they imbue the clod with life; they transform the cell into a palace; they expand the powers of the soul. In preparing the child for future bondage, if we must, let us spare him the one gift that testifies to his immortal lineage.

We are told that the public school does what it is created to do when it trains the masses

for useful and honorable citizenship by teaching them reading, writing, and arithmetic. It works for uniformity and exactness; it turns out good book-keepers, alert tradesmen, careful workmen. It is for the average child, not the genius. (How would Shakespeare have come through the treadmill of a public school? Probably he would have run away. Truancy is not always crime.)

The private school is often sought as a relief from this too severe training, and it is apt to fall into the other extreme. School training, like every other predetermined course of procedure, has its Scylla and Charybdis. It is the fate of nearly every virtue that it has its corresponding vice, into which it may degenerate when the part is mistaken for the whole. Formerly it was thought that the commanding function of the school was the gaining of information. To know the mechanics of knowledge,—the processes in arithmetic, the use of script letters in writing, the ready pronunciation of the words in reading—was the first thing to be taught, and these were then to be used during the remainder of the child's school days in gaining the knowledge embodied in the text-books.

Fill up the mind in school, as you would fill a store-house with grain, to be used later as the exigencies of life shall require. Nor has this primitive notion gone out of the convictions of men.

*But modern education is declaring that the first and last purpose of systematic instruction in school is expression.*

Since, then, expression is the business of life, cultivation of the means of expression becomes imperative. The artisan who best expresses his thought in a bit of wood or metal is the most successful. This is true of the artist with his brush or of the writer with his pen; in fact it holds good in any of the seven modes of expression employed by man. The highest mode is language, spoken or written. The ability to communicate with one's fellow, is, perhaps, man's greatest gift, and when it is considered that, at first, a few sounds expressive of hunger, cold, satisfaction, and the like, comprised his entire vocabulary, that no word was ever formed or used by him until some need or emotion forced its utterance, we will begin to understand that language grows as the soul grows, and that no one is prompted to speak or

write until he has something to say. If this be true it would follow logically that no child should be expected to talk or write except under the impulse of interest.

If language is the expression of thought, then one cannot exist without the other, and each must, in turn, react upon and develop its complement; so the child must be given subjects of interest to him in his life rather than ours, and he will then express himself readily enough.

We must remember that man talked a long time before he began to write. The child follows to some degree the order of development of the race. The average city child or, at least, the average city boy, possesses three languages—that of the home, of the street, and a third, a restricted and stilted tongue by which he tries to give utterance to what he thinks the teacher wishes him to say, and from which he seldom lapses in her presence save when some emotion surprises him into naturalness. It is generally conceded that the structure of the child's language is fixed during his earliest years; some going so far as to say that his forms of speech are fixed before he is five years

old. Of course, in doing this he imitates the language he hears. No other course is possible to him. Perhaps this is the reason why people of wealth and refinement place their children in the care of nurse maids who, generally speaking, are unable to construct an English sentence correctly! We are fond of saying that the age of fetish worship is long past, but the fetish is still with us. This must be so, else we could not permit the child to form the most careless habits of speech, and then place him in the charmed atmosphere of the school room, resting in the belief that the teacher with her educational sponge can wipe off all the indelible impressions that habit and environment have graven with a pen of iron upon the infant mind.

Alcott says "Man does only what he chooses." It is equally true that man always lives up to what he really believes. It is a question whether he can ever lie to himself, however much he may try to do so. If, for instance, you and I really believed that certain early influences made or marred the child's future usefulness to such a degree that all later effort could only modify, never entirely eradi-



cate the evil, that the wounds when healed left a most ugly scar, would we dream of submitting the child to conditions we now regard with indifference simply because we entertain the erroneous idea that the young mind is a slate from which all habits may be washed at will?

It has been already suggested that imitation is a powerful factor in education. Few persons, if any, learn to speak correctly through a study of grammatical rules. They are valuable as a preliminary exercise in logic, as an aid to acquiring a foreign language, or in settling knotty questions in the construction of one's own; but the child speaks what he hears. If he is surrounded by cultivated people their speech is his by imitation, and this is equally true when the conditions are reversed. People who have read and studied very little will speak and write with habitual correctness and elegance if they have always enjoyed the society of good models, and it is only when some unusual and rare construction comes up that their ignorance of syntax becomes apparent. Of course, any young child is apt at first to say "I done," or "It is broke," or "I seen," etc.,

but if pains are taken to make him use the correct forms a few times each day, he will soon employ them habitually; not because he knows any reason for doing so, but simply because his memory will remind his tongue and by and by he learns to speak correctly as he would learn a tune. Imitation, training, habit—these seem to be the whole secret of early language training, and many teachers make note of the most objectionable errors of their pupils and give frequent practice in the correct forms.

This is particularly effective in treating the mistakes peculiar to the locality. Suppose, for example, that the children in a district are accustomed to say “trun” for thrown; the simple devices of leading the pupils to make up little stories, employing the correct forms of these words, using only the odd moments when one is waiting for the recess, or the class gong, has an educational value that cannot be estimated. In time the exercises may be so varied and so skillfully conducted as to modify the speech of an entire neighborhood.

Then, too, there is the influence of good literature which awakens a lively interest. A child can read and appreciate a book, which one

would think far beyond his attainments, provided the matter interests him. The fact that he does not know many of the words does not seem to deaden the interest nor to mar the effect upon his language, and as he grows older these words return to him with their true meaning, particularly if he is allowed to read the same book many times. Without doubt many children do too much desultory reading at too early an age. There is a time when this is necessary, but until he is well on toward his teens it would seem better to read and re-read a few books thoroughly than to swallow like a cormorant many books, though they may be good literature. It is well to give him early a few good models with which to lay the foundation of his language. Later he reads omnivorously, not for structure, but for information. The two processes should never be confounded or one mistaken for the other. (This opinion, however, is controverted by many excellent teachers.)

It is a common error to explain every word the child reads. If assistance is given, it should only be that which will bring the child into sympathetic touch with what he is read-

ing. Suppose, for instance, he has Whittier's *Snowbound*—any narrative or incident showing the severity of a New England winter, the depth of a fall of snow in that locality, the simple comfort and family joys of old-fashioned country life, would be in order. It is of no consequence whether he can or cannot spell and define all the words in the poem or draw a correct copy of the andirons, or produce a silhouette of the cat generally found in the illustration on a certain page. What shall it profit a child if he learns the whole poem by heart unless he understands and is in harmony with the environment of the scene; unless the beauty of its picture pervades and enlarges his mental vision and arouses his sympathy?

The mission of good literature is just this, and if, by any means, he fails to catch its real lesson, then he may gain an abundance of ideas and facts but miss the growth and expansion of soul which is the real object of all good literature. So let the child brood over a few good books if he will, never meddling or helping except in the way indicated, and not doing this unnecessarily. He will be stronger and better for this silent uninterrupted communion

with his book or, rather, with the people he comes to know there. There is an old adage: "Beware of the man of one book." Oliver Cromwell was one of these men of one book. His was the Bible, and he gave liberty of conscience to England.

The root of a plant grows in the darkness; the process of development is not carried on before the curious eye. What would happen if the plant were dug up occasionally that we might note the increasing length of the fibres, or, better still, that we might watch them grow? We seem to understand plant life better than our own.

The child must write, the school says, write unceasingly, whether he has anything to write about or not. But a wiser injunction is, "First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." "First the ear," the school says; no wonder that the full corn is lacking.

Man took ages to develop oral speech. The little child should do an immense amount of talking before he begins to express himself in writing. This is the time in which the ear should be cultivated—something almost forgotten in the school. The young writer cannot give

attention to form at the same moment that he is supposed to be writing from impulse. He cannot kindle the celestial fire and while it burns write to margin with ink and pen and dot his i's and cross his t's and slant all his letters according to rule. Look at the manuscripts of our famous authors; not all were able to attain excellence in mechanical form while burning with great thoughts. But some seem to think the child must do all this from the start, when both form and substance are new to him.

This idea is hoary with age, but modern methods are better. They recognize that divided attention by young children is fatal to progress. From the child's experience in learning to talk, we should direct his experience in learning to write. He learns to talk by practice in talking; he must learn to write by practice in writing. In writing—by which is meant graphic expression of thought—the child's attention must be held to what he wishes to say and the hand must obey the impulse of the mind, as the tongue obeys the impulse of the mind in learning to talk. The child would never learn to talk by first making a phonic

synthesis of each word. In writing he simply draws the form of the word that is in his mind. It may lack some letters and other things, but the muscles of his fingers draw it as the muscles of his vocal organs formed his first words—by imitation. Drill in perfecting this form is a separate school exercise, not to be confused with writing, any more than a phonic drill is to be confused with talking. Soft, unsized paper, a lead pencil not too short, nor too hard, and well sharpened, are needed to lure the youthful tyro into this avenue of expression. Later the rocks and sharp stones will not appear so formidable; but at first he should see only the smooth, inviting sand. Oddly enough this figure carries one back to primitive times when children in many a dame's school took their first writing lesson in large boxes of fine sand. The characters they made were large and did not strain the eye, but cultivated the necessary freedom of the arm. "How crude," we say, yet we have nothing today that satisfactorily takes the place of that obsolete box of sand. Children love to write in this way. Perhaps our early ancestors did the same in the first stages of this art, and the child thus repeats the experiences of the race.

Time was, also, when our forefathers gained from myths their first notions of justice, truth, and honor. Vague, imaginative, living close to nature, their dawning emotions could find utterance in no other channel. All that the race felt of love and virtue was transmitted in this way. The little child must travel the same road. Why not allow him to ride in the same easy, comfortable conveyance that the young of all ages have been carried in? Later he must walk, of course, but he will be stronger because of the myth and fairy tale. His crude ideas of justice are satisfied when the wicked giant or the cruel witch is punished, when the good king is rewarded, or the fair maiden restored to her friends.

Suppose the child could start in life from our commercial point of view, what would he be when a man? Hard and dry as a nut, without imagination, enthusiasm or ideals. Heaven preserve the child's soul from an exclusive diet of facts. He needs facts to be sure, but he needs ideals and images of beauty to direct the use of his facts. One cannot tie the mind to a little circuit of facts, as he would tether a cow, and escape Gradgrind's disaster. Such treat-



ment is proper for the cow, but not for a growing, aspiring human soul. Then give him the beautiful myths he loves; let him love Santa Claus. His childish heart will respond to all these pictures of nobleness and sacrifice. Later they fade away and are relegated to the background as pretty fancies, perhaps, but their impressions remain. He has grown out of them, cast them aside, but, like the rudimentary organs of the body, they form the foundations upon which his present ideas of justice and virtue are built. As the tadpole, deprived of its tail, fails as a frog to develop the hind legs, so surely does a human soul deprived of the nourishment proper to each period, fail in realizing his own native possibilities.

One does not feed a babe on meat. The Old Testament teachers understood this fact. It is probable that their pupils did not cavil about the size of the whale's throat, or question whether or not the sun could stand still. The thought of God's love was brought home in a way that would best appeal to them in their stage of development. Perhaps they understood the figurative language of the East better than we, but the lesson was taught, the

truth implanted. We in a more advanced age may criticise as we will the means used; but the impression was made, its vehicle has performed its task as no other could in that time and age. All along the road the child gives outward and visible signs of this repetition of his race's experience, in his occupations; his games; his reading; his interest in bead work, weaving, basketry, and pottery; and his desire to learn of primitive peoples.

Later in the fifth to seventh grades, there are reasons why he does not like to sing. There is, of course, change of voice in boys with its accompanying self-consciousness; but greater than all is the fact that he does not get the right kind of songs. He is in the soldier stage and craves martial music. Try a boy with changing voice on whistling popular airs. Cultivate rhythm, by the use of the bones, drum, clappers to accompany the piano. This craving for rhythm sends our boy to clog dances.

After change of voice the boy who sang air is suddenly dropped to the harmony and, at the same time, to the adjustment of a strange voice. Songs in unison should therefore be alternated with harmonized melodies. There

is right here a comparatively untried field for composers in the setting of songs that will give the boy-tenors and basses the melody, while the soprano and alto voices take the harmony.

## VII.

## INFLUENCES.

THE fundamental aim in all education is the realization of true family life. The civilization of every people is measured by this standard. Human greatness has its rise in the home. No man has ever attained distinction in any field of thought or industry whose early years have not been blessed with some enjoyment of home life. He may have been an orphan or been born in poverty, but some experience of home has crept into his lonely life. If man sprang into existence full grown, ready for all the emergencies and experiences of life, there would be no family ties; the joys and griefs and discipline of parenthood and childhood would be unknown. All the loving care, the self-sacrifice, the forbearance, which have been slowly evolved through the long, long evolution of the race, would be unknown, and we would have no more sense of kindred than

a chicken or a cat. The intelligence of animals is in proportion to the length of their infancy. Man, the highest type of animal, is the most helpless of all creatures at birth. The ever increasing experiences of each generation send each succeeding man into the world with a larger number of brain cells. The greater the number of these, the longer he remains an infant. If it were possible for man to materially shorten his period of infancy the result would not be so beneficial as he sometimes imagines.

The two great necessities of the home are love and a certain degree of seclusion or exclusiveness. A too public life dissipates the affections. To love God and one's neighbor requires frequent and close communion. Man is not prepared for either until he has learned the alphabet of love in the home, where he masters it a few letters at a time. A may be a little poodle, B a ragged doll; each succeeding letter will mark a higher experience. Formerly man's *safety* depended upon the seclusion of his home, and now that he has passed beyond the need of mere physical protection the growing soul demands a similar seclusion. The young child suffers from too early exposure. The

boarding house and the restaurant work serious injury to him. The removal of the front fence, insignificant as it seems, is performing its part in destroying the home feeling, for now a seat upon the front porch means participation in the life of the street. The flat, the hotel, and the restaurant are blessings to those for whom they were originally intended; but the little child does not gain there that sense of personal responsibility and of loving sympathy, nor experience the thousand little homely joys and privileges which may be his in the humblest cottage. These public houses have an expansiveness, a sense of publicity, to which the young child should not be compelled to adapt himself. Even the adult needs repeated withdrawal into the privacy of the home.

Everything that tends to multiply the simple joys of family life is distinctively educative and helpful. The Christmas Tree and the birthday cake do more than the spelling book to make the child a useful, happy man; not that we love the speller less, but the child more. The whole subject resolves itself into a question of values. Education means the ability to estimate truly the great and small things of

life, to note the connection of each to the whole and to place each in its proper relations.

The good, hot, Sunday dinner eaten by the poor laborer in his own kitchen, in the society of wife and children, is distinctively educative. Perhaps this is a materialistic view, but we must pass through the lower into the higher, for this is the law of growth. "If man love not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"

It follows, then, that the home should be a place of rest, of repose, of love. Handsome rooms are not needed, in fact, walls covered with pictures, and shelves with bric-a-brac are often a distinctive drawback to spiritual and mental growth, the general impression being that of confusion. Simple, homely comfort seems to be the better influence; a pretty bedroom to which friends may be invited may keep the boy from wandering, while an open grate fire and a comfortable arm chair often have the same influence upon the father. Some years ago a certain old theatre in New York was especially popular with business and professional men. Neither the plays nor the settings were better than those of other houses, yet men could

attend there when too tired or too dull to go elsewhere. At length the house was remodeled and then the charm was gone. A certain length of seat had afforded a peculiarly comfortable rest for the long thigh bone; this had proved the irresistible attraction. Perhaps builders of churches would do well to heed the suggestion.

Fox terriers are prone to seek different homes; it is a characteristic of the breed. A friend of mine remarked that hers had never done so and probably never would. "How do you manage?" asked one. "It's easy," she replied, "I try to make him very welcome when he comes back from an outing." The kindly pat on the head, and "Good old doggie" from each member of the family always awaited him, and he knew it. Human animals are amenable to the same influences.

One can never estimate fully the effect of environment. For example, how would "Snowbound" have gotten itself written in a modern flat with all the appliances of steam and electricity? And this leads me to repeat what I have said before—that we are not always mindful of the difficulties young people



sometimes encounter in their study of literature. Many a boy in the eighth grade to-day has never seen a shepherd, or a genuine old fire-place; many more are growing up who have never seen a lamp. Can mere verbal reference to these things recall to them the same picture that comes to you and to me? This is a world of change. In another century the child may find similar difficulty in understanding an allusion to the horse and buggy.

Fun is essential to a happy home or a good school. Few situations exist in the ordinary routine of daily life that do not present some element of humor, and the child should be encouraged to look for this. Muddy coffee and tough steak for breakfast are not especially appetizing or agreeable, but it is not always possible to avoid them; while a good hearty laugh may render their assimilation easier. Habitual cheerfulness is spontaneous only in perfect health, but the confirmed invalid may attain unto it, for it is contagious. The most dejected and wretched of human beings are made less wretched by the effort to be cheerful. It is often wise to assume a gentle courtesy and good nature that are not spontaneous. The

form stimulates the growth of the virtue, except in hypocrites. Every well-meaning effort to be cheerful promotes the growth of cheerfulness. The virtue grows by what it feeds upon.

Christian philosophy differs fundamentally from that of Herbert Spencer, but the church owes him a debt of gratitude, in that he has helped to show that man cannot be educated in sections. Nor are the three R's deemed sufficient for the most meager preparation for living; the school is now interested in the three H's—head, heart, and hand. The visible result is the present strong trend toward all kind of training for the hand, and toward music, literature, and good behavior for the heart. This is the most notable mark of modern education.

#### UNION OF SCHOOL AND HOME.

When once this co-operation fairly sets in there will be an improvement in the education of children beyond the realization of our fondest dreams. Mothers will then regard their children from the standpoint of science as well as from that of sentiment. It will then be seen

that the suffering children are not found exclusively among the very poor. The power of self-control now sadly lacking in the present generation, will be regained when we begin to realize that concentration must begin in the home in early childhood. It cannot exist in an atmosphere of excitement and unrest. The child who has a superabundance of toys and books, who goes everywhere and is constantly on the alert for some new pleasure, cannot learn it. This power comes slowly, a certain degree of repose being necessary to its growth. The present facilities for rapid transit, the telephone and many other inventions so conducive to our comfort and convenience, encourage a diversity of activity and experience not favorable to repose. We cannot get away from them, but their influence may be greatly modified when parent and teacher shall study such problems together. The young child is incapable of concentrating its attention for long, but that ability increases with judicious exercise. The simple life and daily recurring duties of the homes of the first half of the last century were more favorable to this needed repose.

Intelligent experiment in the nursery will do much to aid the primary teacher in determining the length and character of her various exercises, and will emphasize the necessity for more frequent rest periods; while the mother who now complains that her eight-year-old daughter "lacks concentration" will know that this power must be nurtured in the home before the child enters school, and that even under the most favorable conditions not much can be expected. Few of us see the child as he really is. This is particularly true of the boy whom one mother regards as a sort of athletic girl, while the mother of high ideals and sensitive temperament often does him incalculable injury by her analytic, anxious study of his physical and moral symptoms. The boy is bathed, washed, dosed, read to, dissected, lectured and prayed with until he becomes a canting little hypocrite, a callous young sinner, or a morbid, shrinking, over-conscientious creature with small realization of his birthright of a happy wholesome childhood. No one needs Divine guidance more than the teacher, but we ought to study God's plan as set forth in his works. We might improve our definition of prayer. Emerson would help us.

The school is apt to expend its energy in teaching abstract knowledge. What the child thus acquires, he sees through a glass darkly. His great, perhaps greatest, school need is wholesome, interesting occupation for hours out of school. A few flower seeds, some bits of wood and a set of carving tools, a chest of carpenters' tools may save him from perdition, if they come at the right time. We wait too long—until after he has formed other tastes. A child in the second or third grade is interested in growing flowers, in carrying soil in his cart, in gathering bits of paper on the lawn with his broom handle, into the end of which he has driven a long nail for a spike—anything, in fact, which will employ his restless muscles in useful ways, and these interests continue without flagging through the fourth grade; but in the fifth grade there is a change. Pupils here show little interest in these occupations unless they have already learned to love them, and in the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades they look with a sort of elevated toleration upon those who seem to like this sort of thing. They have acquired other tastes.

The inability to employ leisure moments to advantage pervades all classes of society. It impels the rich to all manner of excesses, while the poor take to the saloon or the street corner. Both classes are suffering the punishment of empty-mindedness. Some years ago a prosperous Australian city became able to pay its working men better wages. Certain business firms made it easy for their employes to support their families comfortably by working but little more than half a day. The released laborer took to drink, became idle, quarrelsome, and obnoxious; the women, too, grew discontented. They neglected their homes, complained of their large families, and tried to imitate the selfish idleness of the wealthier classes. They followed the only course open to them. It is probable that this experience would be repeated in every city in many individual cases.

Every child loves to do something; let us make that something educative. Some will collect insects or gather fossils and beautiful stones, while others are interested in the habits of fish or birds. Noted naturalists have been created in this way, and a man whom we all know has become eminent through a collection

of weeds which he commenced in early boyhood. No outlay of money is needed for this sort of work; in fact, interest generally declines in the ratio that expensive outfits are provided. The chief requirement is a wise and sympathetic mother and teacher, not afraid of toads and snakes; one who says little but helps much; one who does not show displeasure at a little dirt and can, if necessary, assist the boy in his various undertakings. Agassiz's mother helped him dig the receptacles for the fish he so loved, and this community of interest in his early childhood formed a tie which lasted during life. Who can say how much of future greatness has had its rise in this wholesome companionship and direction of early childhood?

It is suggested above that a simple outfit, that meets all requirements, is better than a more elaborate one. A boy likes something that he has made or provided for himself, something he is not afraid of spoiling. A common glass fruit jar makes a fine aquarium, and much is gained if he is invited to bring his treasure to school as an adornment for the window sill. It is here that the home and the

school have much in common; a judicious hint from the mother may be followed by encouragement of some particular taste which needed only this influence to develop and strengthen it, while the teacher, in her turn, may be able to make many valuable suggestions from her point of view. The child at school is generally a far different being from the child at home—often better, sometimes worse—but he is rarely the same in both places. This dual existence is a distressing fact, seldom understood, but it suggests a fruitful field of study.

Another advantage of this co-operation is the change of views and opinions that is sure to result on both sides. Children often evince interests and tendencies which seem evidences of unusual talent to the eyes of maternal affection, but when the child works daily with thirty or forty others of the same age, in the same environment, many an intelligent mother has been surprised to find that the darling who appeared so brilliant at home is not the star of his class but is merely a good average. Nothing is so helpful in correcting false impressions of this kind as comparison, and a kind-hearted teacher can offer many helpful suggestions.



This is particularly true when she is asked (as she often is) to name the child's leading tendency or interest, or to state what she thinks the child will be best fitted for when a man. This is always a hard question for the conscientious teacher. Only tact and perfect truthfulness will keep her in the right path. Few children show strongly marked and continuous tastes in early childhood. They generally evince a variety of tendencies, a desire to flit from one interest to another. This is perfectly normal as this is the period of budding interests, and only a strong and constantly recurring interest should be taken seriously.

Then there is the period of puberty when lassitude makes physical exertion painful. The boy may find in books the path of least resistance. His physical condition is mistaken for an awakened love of study. We think our hero entering upon a professional career, when, in fact, his body is developing so fast that he has no energy for the voluntary muscles.

Parents who have grown weary with toil look up to professional life as an opportunity for elegant leisure, and they insist upon thrusting their children into it without regard to

their fitness or choice. This sort of thing will continue until all classes of society form truer ideals. It is vain to talk of the dignity of menial toil, so long as wealth continues insolent and overbearing toward the toiler. No one is so quick to see the real estimate placed upon labor as the laborer himself. If he is ignorant he accepts the standard which money sets up. If intelligent, he protests and is unhappy. His family strives to follow the lead of wealth in its expenditures, with the result that his expenses exceed his income, thus rendering life false to its very core.

There is a wide difference between drudgery and intelligent labor—labor with brains behind it. Many people whose lives are spent in a nerve-wrecking struggle to appear what they are not, would be glad to live plainly and simply within their incomes if they could only know that inexpensive raiment, and an unfashionable domicile did not consign their children and themselves to social oblivion; that culture and intelligence do not count. Many a young woman would exchange the comfortless factory or merchant's counter for a cosy kitchen, if she could feel that the brain power put into scien-

tific house-work was respected equally with that which writes books or conducts a business.

Co-operative study of parents and teachers will emphasize the necessity of independent effort on the part of the child, and of drill to secure facility.

By a wrong use of this developing method of teaching, the inductive method has been misapplied, until the average child waits to have his work done for him; I mean the work that he should do for himself. The joy of conquest is rarely his. This is a great wrong, for the normally developed child loves to wrestle, mentally as well as physically, and one of the keenest and most wholesome pleasures he can ever know is the satisfaction that always follows a conflict in which he has come off victor. Two-thirds of the fighting in which boys indulge is for the purpose of deciding superiority in courage, or strength, or skill. Tact can turn this desire for conquest into the field of mental effort, and the boy will gain pleasure in fighting the problems he meets in his daily work. How can he better learn to fight his own besetting sins than by the persist-

ent exercise of a self-initiative in mastering his tasks?

Then, too, we love to do that which we can do *well*. It may be that no one engages in work of any kind merely for the pleasure of the work, but as skill comes his joy in the execution increases. Skill comes only with repetition. We find in ourselves aptitudes for some particular kinds of work, but even these must be trained. He must have practice, repetition; and the experience that comes from this will make our enjoyment complete. The young person of to-day is a comparative stranger to this enjoyment. He has a restless sort of interest when he has any, but persistent concentration upon one thing until it is well done is rare. As the time draws near for him to leave school he ought to be familiar with the joy of conquest which comes from independent and sustained conflict.

The artisan of to-day has lost a great incentive and pleasure in that he seldom sees his work grow under his hands to a complete whole. The tailor of old found a joy in the completed coat. That is unknown to the workman in the factory engaged, day after day, in working to

the finish some particular part of the garment only. The former system had an educational value, while the other is merely a mechanical, soul-killing grind. No wonder that the victim of these unhappy conditions flies to the billiard table, the saloon, the theatre, as soon as the evening comes. Every cell of his body is crying out for a change, and dissipation is the only relief which society has provided from the deadening monotony of the day's work. Is the fault his or ours? In what degree are we preparing the children to resist such a fate? We condemn intemperance, and assail high heaven with our prayers, while we ignore the effects of food, the forming of intemperate habits of feeling and conduct, the evils of social dissipation, and when the mischief is done, we run about seeking to reform our victims. Surely we, the parents and teachers, are to blame for the bending of the twig that makes the crooked tree. The fullest answer that can come from prayer is the impulse to supply an environment for the child that will lead him toward a good standard of life at every step. God gives every bird its food, but does not drop it into the bird's mouth. We sometimes look to the clouds for help when the aid we seek is within us.

Another matter for co-operative study is that of amusements. How much and how little may the growing child have? What amusements are suited to each age?—their relative value?—their use and abuse? Temperament, health, and social conditions all have their bearing on this important topic. What someone calls the “principle of inoculation” can be often applied to advantage. It is impossible to vaccinate the child with certain amusements and pastimes innocent in themselves—but made instruments of evil by some in later life—at the age he craves them, in such a way that, although he may take to them violently for a time, he will recover and become indifferent to them before he is grown.

Another subject for co-operative consideration is that of promotions. Complaint is often heard that the teacher “crowds the pupil,” “crams him,” “pushes him on before he is ready.” But the parent is often to blame in this matter. When the child has not done the work who is it that begs and implores the teacher to give him a condition, even when the child is in poor health and absolutely unfit for any great mental effort? And the reasons

given for the request—"John feels so bad!" "All his playmates have gone into a higher room;" "He is the tallest boy in his class;" "His father promised him a gold watch if he went up at the end of the term." Frequent meetings of mothers and teachers would show up this matter in its true light. The class spirit is a valuable asset in the school, and chagrin and mortification are serious drawbacks which should be eliminated from the child's life as much as possible; but a little study of the conditions and work will provide the parent with higher and more humane reasons for desiring promotion, while the teacher may gain a more sympathetic insight into the mental and physical conditions of the home. Inflexible courses of study and the same promotion tests for all classes of pupils have many sins recorded against them.

## VIII

## INFLUENCES.

*Continued.*

THE question of athletics for girls demands serious consideration. Twenty-five years of its study and practice have transformed the once delicate American girl into a Diana. Her mental and physical improvement is admitted, but in view of woman's maternal functions, may not muscular development be carried too far? It is not best that all muscles should be like iron. Observe the physical exercises given to girls in their teens—the kneeling, bending, posing, and many others. To put a group of thirty or forty girls and boys through this every day without the slightest reference to individual conditions or sex is unwise. The spiritual control of the physical body resulting in grace of movement and instant response to the will is education; but girls have no call to be athletes.



Few of us realize as we ought the value of short and frequent rest periods. Every girl should be trained in this art from early childhood. The ability to lie prone upon the back for a few minutes, and to sleep at will for a quarter of an hour, would save many a school girl from collapse. These habits are not so much a matter of leisure and opportunity as of self-control. Napoleon so trained himself that he could fall asleep whenever he willed—even in the saddle. Though not physically robust, he had more endurance than any of his comrades. He knew the value of minutes. Nothing is more beneficial to health than self-control. Training of this kind often prevents insanity, and a noted prison official declares there would be fewer murderers if the children in the public schools acquired the power to sit perfectly still for five minutes each day. The self-control thus gained would arrest the fatal blow until the passion that prompted it had subsided. Why not make the rest habit second nature from early childhood?

Sleep and fresh air are wonderful remedies for tired nerves. Throw open the window when the child goes to bed and he will awaken

refreshed, if he is properly protected from a draft. Perhaps earlier generations owed some of their sturdiness to the fact that their houses were more open to the weather, and air-tight windows were a thing unknown.

Certain kinds of piano practice requiring monotonous repetition, with no thought back of it, are excessively wearing, and should never be tolerated. In the last chapter, something was said favorable to drill, but the drill there referred to was educative, because its participants are interested in it and employ it as a means of acquiring some desired facility or skill. The conditions are different when the child is allowed to strum on the piano wearily and drearily, intent only upon filling a certain number of minutes. This pernicious custom is doing much to discourage piano teaching, and perhaps the time is near when parents will realize that the young piano pupil should never practice without supervision. Better thirty minutes of work under the teacher's eye than hours spent in fumbling the key board with eyes furtively watching the clock and the mind wandering off to the anticipated release from drudgery.

Not only are the educational advantages of such a course apparent, but the saving in time and money as well as the economy of effort must also appeal to us. A large number of our children have lost much of their spontaneity and healthful enthusiasm in life, and deadening piano-practice is one of the causes. Surely mother and teacher will eventually come together on this subject and evolve something better than our present method. There is a growing number of instructors in music that are working for a reform. The entire field offers abundant opportunity to any who will work patiently and honestly, while the rewards are as great and as certain as any found in other paths of original research.

If the mothers and teachers in each community would agree upon one or two simple problems within the experience of the average woman, and study them together until some reasonable solution had been discovered, the results would be far more helpful and valuable than anything attained thus far. We seem to fear that we will not be considered learned unless we busy ourselves with some abstruse subject, and write papers upon it, which are as lit-

tle understood by the listeners as they are by the writers—forgetting that simplicity is the mark of wisdom. The educational doctrines of Plato and Aristotle are interesting to be sure, but why not study modern American methods instead? They ought to be more helpful.

As to the subject of foods, in view of modern research, scarcely any one topic is so universally important. In some instances it is possible to change the sex of an organism through its food, as in the case of the bee and tadpole. Criminology has shown that moral degeneracy attends enfeebled physical conditions which have their rise in poorly nourished and poorly warmed bodies. Indeed the three agencies are food, temperance, and social influences. Everyone realizes the importance of the last, but what association of women in the country have studied the subject of foods persistently and intelligently until some definite conclusion has been reached in reference to the relative values of certain articles of diet? They know more of the conquest of Peru. We flit like butterflies over vast fields of literature and history without any definite aim or purpose be-

yond a vague desire for improvement or show. What is the matter? Are we afraid of appearing ignorant or common? How can the study of anything great or useful belittle us? How can we help shining a little in its reflected light?

Foods are mentioned only as an illustration. There are many other topics of study exceedingly important and quite as common.

The average club woman seems to pass through three distinct stages of evolution. First comes the essay stage, in which the young matron writes "lovely papers" whose weakness is their total failure to touch life at any point. To be sure, the blue satin bow that adorned the graduation theme a few years before is now conspicuously absent, but this is the only difference between the two productions. Marriage and motherhood have not yet greatly widened her horizon, but there is a freshness, a keenness of interest, a rosy optimism that is certainly very promising. In the second stage, our fledgling is now full fledged, disporting herself in the shadowy vale of mysticism. The religions of Asia and the philosophy of the Nile are her delight. The metaphysical and esoteric she revels in. She daz-

zles her club on an afternoon with her own bewilderment.

The growth of many a club woman is arrested at this stage. My near neighbor, a sincere and lovable woman, goes every Wednesday afternoon to discuss the needs, physical and spiritual of the babes in Booraboolaga, and returns much uplifted and refreshed; her own infant in the meantime spends hours in the care of a nurse maid who places its nursing bottle on the stone parapet, while she, herself a child, joins in the play of the group intrusted to her care. As I write, the scorching sun is shining full upon the bottle from which the innocent babe slakes its thirst from time to time. Tomorrow we shall hear of a "troublesome night," "the child's inherited delicacy of stomach," etc. Yet before bedtime, I, myself, may be guilty of as glaring an inconsistency and lay my head upon my pillow with a similar sense of superiority that sustains the little mother in the next square. And so we go on until, perchance, some reach the third stage in which sincere, wholesome, helpful, sane club work is done. The frivolous and the immature dropped by the wayside, but the work done by

those who remain, is effective because they have learned to form true estimates of values and live up to the rules they lay down for others.

This latter is the secret of success in all preventive and reformatory work whether in the school or the home. Nothing so tests one's sincerity as an honest attempt to live up to his own theories. It is easy to exhort a poor woman, who earns her bread by scrubbing, to keep the Sabbath holy, and to make her home attractive and fit for the abode of angels, but let us suppose that we are deprived of our own Sunday drive, and shut up six days in the week in a hot, steamy kitchen with a fretful babe. "I could not reform an ant unless I became one," says Tolstoi. He lived under the same conditions, and carried the same burdens, as the peasant he was trying to help. Did we but follow the advice we give to others so freely, the slums had long ago repented in sackcloth and ashes. The slums are as keen as children in noting the discrepancy between our theory and our practice. They know that we do not believe what we say, or we would do it ourselves. This feeling of unreality is pernicious not alone in

club life; it vitiates the home life, and is reflected in greater or less degree by every member of the family circle. Everyone is influenced by the unseen, unspoken, but not unfelt, attitude of those with whom he lives, and this is especially true of the very young. The dishonest parent or teacher will unconsciously lead his children in the direction of dishonesty, even though he tries to appear upright before them. Perhaps this is what is meant by "visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children."

Few realize the immense importance of their mental attitude upon a subject in its influence upon others, especially upon those who are younger or dependent in any way upon them. It is not easy to be wholly honest. Indeed relative honesty is all that weak human nature has been able to attain thus far, but we shall have progressed far, both in intelligence and virtue, when we are content to appear as we really are, instead of straining every nerve to seem what we are not. Club work has a great opportunity right here.

"Why all this fuss about children," remarked an old woman at a mothers' meeting a short time ago; "In my days we were taught



to keep the commandments and were spanked when we did wrong." "Yes," said another, "But what do you mean by keeping the commandments?" This seems to be the kernel of the whole subject. The commandments are interpreted by each generation anew, and by each individual according to his ability to keep abreast of, or rise above the generally accepted views of the time. The simple savage keeps the decalogue when he refrains from the grosser crimes of murder, robbery, and the like. The more subtle violations of the law, such as slander, the trickeries of the commercial world, and the unreality of domestic life are beyond his comprehension. To him, sin is the commission of certain acts, while with us it is the intentional failure to choose the highest good. To him, religion is the acceptance of a certain creed, to us it is a condition of heart. One evidence of the divine origin of the Christian religion is that no one can live up to it. All that human nature can do is to approximate it. When man reaches his ideal it is no longer his ideal. When we are able to understand all truth and to bring science and revelation into perfect accord, then we shall be as

gods, and growth will cease. As the invention of the tool marked the arrest of the development of the body, so would the possession of all knowledge bring about the arrest of the growth of the mind. The power to think, is the very breath of man's nostrils, and marks the difference between a joyless, automatic, deadening adherence to rules, and a warm, glad growth, pulsating with life and happiness. Each year finds us a little nearer death, or a little more alive.

This is, in part, the reason why some mothers and teachers wear out so much more quickly than others. The letter kills but the spirit makes alive. No one knew this better than the great Froebel, and no one has labored more earnestly and intelligently than he to restore to the child the conditions for perpetual growth. His principles are applicable to every age or form of government, but their application must differ according to the grade of civilization. His system originated under a despotic form of government, and was intended to counteract, in a degree, the evils of a military regime, which regarded the individual merely as a unit to be trained for state purposes. Under these

conditions it is quite in order to pursue certain methods, which, in our own country may work harm when used by the unskillful.

Mothers should beware lest the teacher assume her prerogatives. The public school occupies a peculiar position. Emigration brings to its doors many totally unacquainted with the language and customs of their adopted country. Add to these the poor, whose parents work early and late, and it can be readily seen that the public school is the only institution by which certain evils can be remedied. Under these conditions it has easily, almost imperceptibly, advanced far beyond its original function, while the home has gradually retreated. Now the disadvantage of a wrong relation lies in the fact that it prevents the establishment of a right one. Foster parenthood is not strikingly prominent in biology; its adoption by man is comparatively recent, and, like other new things, apt to be put to uses for which it is not intended, to the serious injury of all concerned.

One striking defect in our attempts at education is the failure to provide interests and occupations for old age. So much thought is spent upon the beginning of life, so little upon

the end. Infancy is, of course, the time for building the foundation; childhood and youth are our chief solicitude and must always be; middle age receives some attention; but the declining years are often unlovely and as naked as a leafless tree.

The early part of life is spent in preparation and pleasure; then come family cares, business anxieties, the struggle for a competence; and when, at last, declining strength indicates that the period of active warfare is over, the worker sinks out of public view, thankful indeed if his labors have provided a stage for the closing scene in his little drama.

Science is seeking to discover how to prolong life, but what benefit is the mere lengthening of years if the time thus added is empty and uninteresting. Old age should be a period of usefulness and rational enjoyment, and both parent and teacher should work definitely toward this end. No educational system is adequate that does not build for old age. Having health it does not require great material wealth. The appetite diminishes as physical activity declines; warmth, cleanliness, and a small amount of food make up the sum of its daily

necessities; but what it chiefly craves is recognition; its secret grief lies in its consciousness of waning power, in the knowledge of a lost usefulness. This should never be, and need not be. "Old men for counsel, young men for strength" is the vital and active principle of the best civilization. Growing knowledge brings better modes of living which tend toward a steadily increasing length of life.

This calls for a re-adjustment of educational methods to meet the demand of this longer period of repose. Man's education should lay the foundation for employment in old age. We remain young only so long as the mind is active. Age is not determined by years; many die of old age in their youth. Some are never alive, while others remind one of a kernel which is full of germinal activity. The serious evil in luxurious living is the distaste it gives for persistent effort and the constantly growing desire for something new. Both are fatal to happiness at any time of life. The properly educated mind never loses its delight in a beautiful sunset, in a clear sky, or in the tint of a flower, but the ability to feel and enjoy the companionship with nature must be cultivated

as well as the art of money getting or money spending. Books are the chief resource for the energies of old age, and they are always with us. Teach the child to love good reading, and he will have the great minds of the world for his friends when he is old and they will never fail him. Neither financial adversity nor a body shorn of its strength can separate them from him.

No one is ever older than he feels. Hospitality to new ideas is the fountain of perpetual youth. Every child should learn how to use the public library and the museum before he completes the eighth grade. A stiff formal visit under supervision once or twice a year is not enough. He should know the officials as tried and trusted friends. This relationship should grow with his years. Thank God there are many men and women in the world today who are doing untold good by winning the confidence of their youthful friends and guiding their tastes in the right direction.

The boy or girl who learns to use these two institutions properly is educated for all time. When once the child has acquired the habit of dawdling, gossiping, or lounging on the street

corner, it is exceedingly hard to create interest in better things. There is a deadening influence in these and kindred indulgences that is not easily explained. They affect all classes of society, and when once they become a part of the child's life, his sensibilities seem to be seared as with a hot iron.

Music is a never failing source of enjoyment. Every one should learn to play some instrument. It may not always be possible nor profitable to continue this accomplishment through life, but the study of a musical instrument, even if one acquires but little skill in using it, will lead to a musical knowledge and a discriminating taste that enlarges one's horizon and adds much to the happiness of declining years. This pleasure is not dependent on the exhaustive study of elaborate compositions. Very many intelligent people do not respond to classical music, but the appreciation grows if we continue in a receptive attitude. The simple old-fashioned melodies, endeared to us by association as well as by their intrinsic beauty, ought never be left out of the home. Every boy and girl should learn to play and sing them. Good music has kept many a

hearthstone sweet and pure and the old tunes have followed the wanderer to the uttermost parts of the earth, awakening memories of home.

The picture of an old father or mother spending a twilight existence beside a barely tolerant fireside is a disgrace to humanity, a blot upon civilization; and the home which tolerates such an exposition of hypocrisy and selfishness well deserves all the discontent and unrest from which it suffers. It does suffer, for every act brings its inevitable consequence, whether of joy or pain, and the hearth that is guilty of so flagrant an act of cruelty is a stranger to peace and contentment. Teach the child to reverence the aged if you would make his own life happy.

Above all, lead him to feel the joy of loving service. An act enobles or dwarfs according to the motive behind it. The "servant girl" problem would be solved if this principle pervaded the home. One child washes dishes with a feeling of discontent and repugnance. The work to her is miserable drudgery. Another performs the service with a glad, joyful heart; she is helping to make the loved ones comfortable. Which, think you, will be the better able



to train and appreciate servants when she has attained to womanhood? Each is performing the same service but one is becoming hard and sordid, while the other is growing in beauty of soul, in a joy of living which the other will never know even though the wealth of the Indies were poured into her lap. Which will you have? There is no neutral ground. We must choose one or the other. The same question comes to each one, though in a different form; rich and poor alike must meet and answer it—shall it be the service prompted by love, or the service that is mere drudgery? Slave or free, which are we? Heaven is within us if we will have it so.

The old German tale of the little girl whose loaf of bread was sour because she wore a sour look while kneading it is as true as history. Let the little ones learn it. The child who complains of being ill after indulging in a fit of anger is probably telling the truth. He is suffering from poison. The fluids coursing through his body are changed, and the repair of the tissues is arrested, in a measure. If joy and love bring health, why should not anger and hate bring sickness?

Suggestion is a wonderful power but little understood, and like every other influence it is capable of producing good or evil results. As some years in the child's life are considered more critical than others with reference to physical and spiritual well-being, so too, some months of each year may be more critical than others with reference to the formation of tastes and habits.

The parent is apt to say that his child's bad habits have been acquired in school. Such a parent would be surprised if he discovered how accurately, yet unconsciously, the child portrays his home life in the school. The average teacher cannot fail to form a tolerably correct picture of each pupil's environment out of school by his conduct within it.

The public school is the most truly democratic institution in the country; without it, a caste system would prevail as well defined as in any old time monarchy. Within the school-room are found representatives of all classes of society who there learn to estimate one another at their true worth regardless of wealth or social position.

A friend who has just returned from a visit to her native city asks, "What makes the work so bad in the schools?" Primarily it is because school officers elected by popular vote seek to meet the wishes of their constituents, except when they have some personal interest of their own to advance. If the people's ideals are low, their representatives have low ideals, and the work of the board is poorly done. The teaching force is under the control of officers who have their finger on the pulse of public opinion. If that is indifferent, the schools are apt to be farmed out for the advancement of private interests. As are the people, so are the schools.

The present intensely commercial spirit that pervades all departments of educational work is the chief obstacle to progress. At the close of the Civil War conditions gave opportunities for the acquirement of wealth hitherto unknown. Many who were poor suddenly became rich, while the wealthy multiplied their possessions by thousands. The present frenzied pursuit of wealth is the result. The atmosphere has become saturated with this desire, and every school inspector, lawyer, or

politician who mounts the platform preaches the doctrine of "getting on." Commercial prosperity is the fetish of the nation, and greed and corruption are rampant everywhere. Formerly those who had done most for their fellow men were the standards set up for the young. But these ideals have vanished like hoar frost on a May morning. Men are now looked upon and admired as heroes, not for the service they have done, but for the great wealth they have acquired, and the boys who listened to their eloquence clothed in faulty syntax conclude that correct speech and decent consideration for others are not necessary to success.

We are nearing the dawn of a better day, because the homes and the school are uniting in planting the conviction in the hearts of the rising generation that it is "Righteousness that exalteth a nation." The generation now at the helm are irrevocably committed to the ideals so indelibly impressed upon them in their youth, that they cannot change materially, and the hope of the country is in the children who are to follow us. So deep seated is this conviction in the minds of little children that wealth is the chief purpose of life, that they write in

their exercise books: "My reason for attending school is, I must get on in my lessons, for I want to get money."

## IX.

## CONCLUSION.

**T**HE trend of thought has altered much during the past fifty or sixty years, and nowhere is this more apparent than in the treatment of children. The term "New Education" is not altogether a misnomer, though it is not really an attempt to introduce something new. It is rather an endeavor to discover what has been in man for centuries, and is fundamental and lasting. Influences which have tended to stimulate this study are classified as follows:

First—The scientific discoveries of Darwin and others.

Second—The application of these discoveries by Herbert Spencer and his colleagues.

Third—The so-called Higher Criticism of the Bible and Religion.

Fourth—The many inventions which, by rapid transit and facilitating various industries, have rapidly changed our national life.

The first and second classes of influences have been already considered in this book. Of the third class it is only needful to say that the accepted modern definition of the word everlasting as not necessarily meaning endless or eternal, in the sense popularly understood, has modified our theories of the world to come. The good and evil effects of the comparatively sudden change in what have heretofore been considered the fundamental propositions of the Christian religion, have been many and important. A large and more hopeful view of the future has been accompanied by a growing disregard of present duty. The two conflicting influences are resulting in a confusion of mind which is dangerous to the rising generation, and is changing the character of the home as well as the sense of moral obligation among the people in general. This seems to be the immediate results of every shifting of ground from one fundamental view to another in the growth of public opinion. But there are other reasons for the present prevailing disregard of justice and of duty.

Prior to 1848 we were a small people living on the Atlantic coast; little was known of the

country west of the Mississippi, and the vast resources of the area beyond were as yet not even dreamed of. The prevalence of hand labor, and the difficulties of travel tended to keep the people near together in little communities where all, coming under the same influences and possessing the same interests, necessarily shared in the same views and opinions. At this time the school and the home were closely connected. The teacher knew the members of each family in the district, and respect for law and authority was felt even when obedience did not follow.

But there came a change. The tide of emigration set in, bringing people to our shores from every nation. Facilities for travel grew apace; the use of machinery in place of hand labor transformed society in every center. Then came the great influx of domestic inventions; later the telephone, the gas stove, and the various applications of electricity, after these the electric car, the bicycle, and the automobile. The general result has been the bringing together in constantly changing combinations, people of every creed and degree of intelligence and morality. The home, the school, the



church, the neighborhood, and the state felt the influence. The home, from its secluded character, was the last to show the effects of this change, and it may be the last to re-adjust itself to the new conditions.

The multiplication of amusements and the diminution of household requirements have produced restlessness in the home life fatal to that repose so necessary to the best home training.

The school-child of today is more intelligent and less reliable than the child of earlier generations. How can we bring back this sterling trait without losing what is gained by better school instruction? If the country is to hold together, if the five institutions of our civilization are to survive and improve, childhood must be taught a higher respect for law and law-givers. The minor influences tending in an opposite direction must be checked, no matter how unimportant they may seem. The important things are the small things. The youth who speaks of the chief executive as "Teddy," and uses a pocket handkerchief bordered with small American flags, has received his first lesson in disregard of law and disrespect of country.

The country is greatly agitated just now on the subject of divorce. The seat of the evil cannot be reached by legislation. The preparation for marriage should begin in the cradle. The child who is indulged from babyhood, who knows no will but its own, who cares for no one but itself, is not apt to make in after years an ideal husband or wife. Strange that women so often excuse in their sons those traits of character that, in their husbands, have caused them suffering.

One great evil that confronts the home today is the withdrawal of the father from family life. The causes are many. Among the chief, is the rise of commercial spirit and the increasing competition in all branches of industry. Many a father is compelled to strain every nerve to keep abreast of his competitors, and when night comes he is fit for nothing but the easy chair, or some light entertainment that will make no demand upon brain or body. This is the chief reason why our theaters are filled with light plays that appeal only to the eye; the reason why the son steals out of the door to go where he can "enjoy himself;" the reason why the wife fails to talk over with her

husband the growing faults in their boy, and seek for the counsel which only a father can give. Meanwhile the mad pace goes on; how much or how little each parent is to blame for the *iliad* of woes experienced and threatened, the parent only knows.

But one thing is certain; few men are able to give their children both moral stamina and large wealth. To raise truly intelligent children requires a blending of both feminine and masculine ideals. There must be close daily personal contact with both parents. Schools and masters however clever can not give the effective touch—it must be warm, close, intelligent family life. The man who makes a fortune rarely has energy to enjoy it afterward. The effort has been too great, and he generally regrets when too late that he spent so much to gain so little.

It is all merely a question of ideals and in this, as in everything else, each one must make his choice. One gets what he works for, for the most part, especially in the life that is worth living.

Two men were digging under my window a few months ago, when one dropped his

spade. "I've found another nickel," he cried. "Pshaw," said the other, "I never find anything but buttons." "You never look for anything but buttons," retorted his companion; "You find buttons because you look for 'em;" and so it is. We get what we seek in this world and must not grumble if it proves to be buttons. The saddest feature is that the innocent, helpless children must suffer for our mistakes.

But all is not lost if the home holds together. We must return to a simpler life. We must take off the leaden cloak of seeming to be what we are not. We must eat, dress, and entertain according to our income, without considering what our neighbors think. We can never be truly ourselves while dominated by others' ideals. To be other than one's self is to be nothing. The world today is full of copies, often of bad originals. Every one is capable of being an original and there is some one thing he can do better than anyone else. Something for which the world is waiting. Teach the child in home and in school to find and do this one thing, and he is no longer a slave, but free. A foolish imitation of others has no temptations for him because his source of joy is in

himself. It is only the empty mind that seeks to fill itself with cheap imitations. And family life is the place to bring out the real thing; to encourage, to burnish, to love the best of which each member is capable.

But in spite of all that has been said of our shortcomings, we are approaching the dawn of a day more glorious than any that have gone before. Greater opportunities bring greater success to him who can improve them. The child today is being cared for more intelligently than ever before. The light of recent discovery has come upon us so suddenly that our eyes are blinded for the moment; but as time passes our mental vision will grow clearer, the judgment truer. Much that is now retained will be cast aside as useless, while some things temporarily discarded will be brought back in a larger and better way. The home will regain its former influence and power, and the glory of coming generations will center around that most sacred of all human institutions. The American Hearthstone.

THE END.

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